00030809

NOT TO BE ISSUED OUT
WITHOUT PERMISSION.

THE
ASIATIC SOCIETY OF BOMBAY
Town Hall, Bombay.

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 18 July, 2018

Epochs of Modern History

EDITED BY

EDWARD E. MORRIS, M.A. & J. SURTEES PHILLPOTTS, B.C.L.

EDWARD III.

REV. W. WARBURTON, M.A.

LONDON : PRINTED BY
SPOTTISWOODE AND CO., NEW-STREET SQUARE
AND PARLIAMENT STREET

EUROPE
during the
14th CENTURY
NORTH ATLANTIC OCEAN
North Sea
Baltic Sea
Black Sea
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
ARABIA
RUSSIA
Golden Horde
Mogol Tartars
POLAND
LITHUANIA
HUNGARY
SWEDEN
DENMARK
Iceland
Faroe Is.
Shetland Is.
Orkney Is.
Kingdom of Fez
Kingdom of Tunis
Kingdom of the Mamelukes
Empire of Tamerlane (1370)
Constantinople
Moscow
Republic of Novgorod

EDWARD III.

BY THE

REV. W. WARBURTON, M.A.

LATE FELLOW OF ALL SOULS COLLEGE, OXFORD; AND
HER MAJESTY'S SENIOR INSPECTOR OF SCHOOLS

B1421

WITH THREE MAPS

SECOND EDITION

30809
ac
55j29

LONDON
LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
1876

All rights reserved

War/Ind
30809

00030809

PREFACE.

THE REIGN of EDWARD III. was long, and crowded with events: little more than a sketch of it in its inner and outer aspects is to be looked for in a book like this, which, moreover, professes only to reproduce and epitomize what has been already brought to light by the original research of others. It may be well, therefore, to mention the names of a few out of many writers whose works should be studied by any who wish to fill up these outlines with more thorough and detailed information.

There is a remarkable dearth of cotemporary historical authorities for the early part of the 14th century. Froissart did not reach manhood till it had passed its meridian. But he founded the earlier portion of his History on the Chronicles of Jehan le Bel, a canon of Liége, who actually served in the Scottish campaign of 1327. This work has recently been discovered, and is edited by M. Poulain,

Brussels, 1863. Froissart's work is valuable from its minuteness and simplicity; but he approaches his subject from the point of view of external picturesqueness, and cares little for the moral aspects and deeper social and political movements of the epoch. The Rolls of Parliament, the treaties, proclamations, and correspondence collected in Rymer's Fœdera on the one hand, and the 'Canterbury Tales' and 'Vision of Piers Ploughman' on the other, are a welcome and necessary supplement to his courtly and chivalric narrative. In the great Florentine History of the Villani brothers will be found many important, though incidental, notices of the Battle of Creci and subsequent English invasions of France, and of the internal condition of that country. The political history of the latter end of Edward III.'s reign is described with extraordinary vividness, though strong party bias, in a remarkably outspoken, and evidently cotemporary, chronicle—a translation of which exists in the Harleian Library, reproduced in the 22nd vol. of *Archæologia.* (The original has been lately found, and is printed in the Rolls series). The cotemporary Chronicles of Robert of Avesbury ('Wonderful Deeds of Edward III.,' Hearne) and those of Knyghton Canon of Leicester (Twysden's 'Decem Scriptores'), and of Walsingham, Historiographer Royal ('Historia Anglicana,' compiled from the annals of the Abbey of St. Albans), which appeared in the following century, contain many important and interesting details. To the above should be

added 'The Poem of the Black Prince,' by the Herald Chandos, edited and translated for the Roxburghe Club by the Rev. H. O. Coxe, Librarian of the Bodleian. Joshua Barnes, who lived in the reign of James II., has left a ponderous folio on the life of King Edward III., which, though written in the spirit of a determined panegyrist, and disfigured by some puerile absurdities, is nevertheless a very valuable contribution to the history of the period.

Of later writers, it may be as well to inform or remind the young student that much important information on the political and social aspects of the time is to be found in Hallam's 'Middle Ages,' Milman's 'History of Latin Christianity,' and Hook's 'Lives of the Archbishops.' For the Black Death, Professor Rogers' 'History of Prices' should be consulted, and two articles contributed to the 2nd and 3rd vols. of the 'Fortnightly Review' by Mr. Seebohm; for the history of Wiclif, Professor Shirley's 'Fasciculi Zizaniorum'; for the social and domestic habits of the epoch, Mr. Wright's 'Homes of Other Days'; for its literature, M. Taine's brilliant Lectures. For the whole reign the latest authority is Mr. William Longman's 'Life and Times of Edward III.,' to which I am largely indebted,—a work equally remarkable for its justice, its variety of interest, and its completeness as a picture of the times.

CONTENTS.

PAGE

INTRODUCTION 1–5

FIRST DECADE, A.D. 1327–1337.

CHAPTER I.

Circumstances attending the accession of Edward III., 6–8. Peace with France, 8. Raid of the Scots into the Northern Counties, 8–13. Peace with Scotland, 14. Murder of Edward II., 15. Marriage of Edward III., 15. He claims the Crown of France, 16. Execution of the Earl of Kent, 18. Fall and execution of Mortimer, 19. Measures for the preservation of the Peace in England, 22.

CHAPTER II.

Edward Balliol invades Scotland, 25. Wins the Battle of Dupplin Moor, is crowned King, 26; and expelled, 28. Edward III. invades Scotland, 29. Battle of Halidon Hill, 30. Prolonged hostilities with Scotland, 31. Claims of Edward III. to the French Crown, 33. Position of the King of France; Battle of Cassel, 36. Edward does homage for Guienne, 37. Friendly and unfriendly relations between England and France, 39. Policy of France, 40. The French strike the first blow, 42.

CHAPTER III.

Map of Europe in the Fourteenth Century; England, Ireland, Scotland, 43. France; Spain, 44. Provence; Sicily, 45. Papal States, 46. Turks, 47. Russia, 48. Denmark, 49. The Empire, 50. Flemings, 52. Wool staples, 55. Final preparations for the War, 56. Battle of Cadsand, 59.

SECOND DECADE, A.D. 1337-1347.

CHAPTER I.

Parliament sanctions war with France, 60. First invasion of France; the King sails for Flanders, 63. Difficulties with his allies, 64. Conference at Coblentz, 66. Siege of Cambrai, 67. Edward marches into France, 68. His correspondence with the Pope, 70. Returns to England for money, 72. Second invasion of France, 77. Battle of Sluys, 78. Siege of Tournai, 79. King returns to England and impeaches Stratford, 81. Breaks faith with Parliament, 85.

CHAPTER II.

Affairs of Scotland, 86. Siege of Dunbar; of Perth, 86; of Stirling, 87. Affairs of Brittany, 88. Relations of England with Papal See, 96. Round Table at Windsor, 97. Murder of Van Arteveldt, 99. The English in Aquitaine and Brittany, 99. Siege of Auberoche and Angoulême, 101.

CHAPTER III.

Third invasion of France by the King in person, 103. He marches through Normandy to Poissy, 103. Crosses the Seine, 106; and the Somme, 108. Wins Battle of Creci, 109. Sits down before Calais, 116. England invaded by the Scots, 117. Battle of Neville's Cross, 118. Siege of Aiguillon, 120; of Calais, 122.

THIRD DECADE, A.D. 1347–1357.

CHAPTER I.

Calais colonised, 128. Edward declines the Imperial Crown, 130. State of England, 130. Of France, 132. Black Death, 134. Its origin, 135. Causes, 136. Nature, 137. The Flagellants, 139. Progress of the Plague, 140. Social effects, 141. Proceedings in Parliament, 145.

CHAPTER II.

Battle of l'Espagnols-sur-mer; Death of King Philip of France, and accession of John, 149. Triple invasion (the fourth) of France, 151. Edward makes friends with the King of Navarre, 152. Inroad of the Scotch; Burnt Candlemas, 153; and return invasion of Scotland, 154. First French campaign of the Prince of Wales, 155.

CHAPTER III.

King John of France summons his States-General, 156. Second campaign of the Prince of Wales, 159. Battle of Poitiers, 160. King John carried to London, 169.

FOURTH DECADE, A.D. 1357–1367.

CHAPTER I.

Condition of France after the Battle of Poitiers, 171. Meeting of the States-General at Paris; Etienne Marcel, 173. The Jacquerie, 175. Intrigues of Marcel with the King of Navarre, 179. Edward's fifth invasion of France, 181. Peace of Bretigni, 183. King John ransomed and restored to France, 184. The Companies, 185. King John returns to England, and dies there, 186.

CHAPTER II.

Prince of Wales married: created Duke of Aquitaine, 187. Duguesclin, 187. Settlement of affairs in Brittany, 188. Spanish Campaign of the Prince of Wales, 189. Battle of Navarrete and restoration of Pedro the Cruel, 195. Sickness and retreat of the Prince, 197.

CHAPTER III.

Domestic affairs of England, 198. Legislation for Ireland, 202.

FIFTH DECADE, A.D. 1367-1377.

CHAPTER I.

Splendour and decay of Edward III.'s reign, 206. Government of the Black Prince in Aquitaine, 207. Pedro the Cruel defeated, 210; and slain, 211. Recommencement of war with France, 212. Massacre of Limoges, 215. Black Prince returns to England, 216. Sea-fight off Rochelle, 218. Siege of Thouars, and failure of expedition to relieve it, 219. Last great invasion of France, by Duke of Lancaster, 220. Review of the condition of France, 222.

CHAPTER II.

Internal affairs of England, 225. Parliamentary parties, 226. State of the Navy 227. The Church is taxed, 228. Death of Queen Philippa; the 'Good Parliament,' 229. Position and political influence of the Black Prince and of the Duke of Lancaster, 229. Death of the Black Prince, 233. Prince Richard acknowledged as Heir-Apparent, 234.

CHAPTER III.

William of Wykeham, 236. Wiclif; the Mendicants, 236. Death of Edward III., 244.

CONCLUDING CHAPTER.

PART I.

Character of Edward III., 245. State of education, 246. Characteristics of the reign, 251.

PART II.

Social condition of the period, 253. Domestic habits, food, and dress of the people, 256.

PART III.

Language and literature, 263. Vision of Piers Ploughman, 266. The Canterbury Tales, 268.

INDEX 271

PEDIGREES.

England, Brittany, and Castile . . . . . *at beginning.*

France, Artois, and Blois . . . . . *to face p.* 34.

Empire, Popes, and Scotland . . . . . „ *p.* 50.

MAPS

EUROPE in the 14th Century . . . . . *at beginning.*

FRANCE after the Peace of Bretigni . . . . *to face p.* 182.

FRANCE, illustrative of the chief Campaigns of the War . . . . . *at end.*

CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY.

A.D.

1327. Deposition of Edward II., and accession of Edward III. (Jan. 29). The Scots invade the Northern Counties. Murder of Edward II. (Sept. 21).

1328. Independence of Scotland recognised by treaty (March 17). Death of Charles IV. of France; Edward III. claims the French Crown. Philip of Valois succeeds to it. Battle of Cassel: Robert Bruce dies, and his son David II. is crowned at Scone (Nov. 23).

1329. Lancaster's abortive attempt against Mortimer. Edward III. does homage for Guienne.

1330. Earl of Kent executed. Mortimer seized and put to death (Nov. 29). The Queen imprisoned.

1332. Edward Balliol invades Scotland (Aug. 7); wins the Battle of Dupplin Moor (Aug. 12); is crowned King of Scotland (Sept. 27); and expelled (Dec. 25).

1333. Edward III.'s first invasion of Scotland. Battle of Halidon Hill (July 19). Balliol reinstated: does homage to Edward III.

1334. Balliol again forced to fly from Scotland.

A.D.

1337. Edward III. assumes the title of King of France.

1339. His first invasion of France. Siege of Cambrai: the King's return.

1340. His second invasion of France. Battle of Sluys (June 24). Siege of Tournai. Truce concluded (Sept. 25).

1341. Impeachment of Stratford: last instance of the trial of a bishop 'by his Peers.'

1342. Siege of Hennebon. Edward invades Brittany.

1343. Fresh truce with France. The Earl of Salisbury crowned King of Man.

1344. Earl of Derby's campaign in Guienne. First gold coin struck in England.

1345. Murder of Van Arteveldt.

1346. Edward's third invasion of France. Battle of Creci (Aug. 26). Siege of Calais begun. Battle of Neville's Cross (Oct. 12).

1347. Calais taken.

1348. The Black Death.

1349. Right of self-taxation asserted by Parliament. Statute of Labourers. Attempt to recover Calais.

1350. Battle of l'Espagnols-sur-mer (Aug. 29). Death of Philip VI., and accession of John II., of France.

1352. Statute of Treasons.

1353. Statute of the Staple.

1355. First campaign of the Black Prince in the South of France. Edward III.'s fourth invasion of France. He is recalled by the siege of Berwick.

1356. Second campaign of the Black Prince. Battle of Poitiers, and capture of King John of France (Sept. 19).

A.D.

1358. Outbreak of the Jacquerie in France.

1359. Edward III.'s fifth invasion of France. Siege of Rheims.

1360. Siege of Paris: Peace of Bretigni (May 8). Liberation of King John of France. That kingdom overrun by 'the Companies.'

1361. Second outbreak of the Plague.

1362. Pleadings ordered to be in the English language. The Prince of Wales is created Duke of Aquitaine, and marries the Fair Maid of Kent.

1363. King of France returns to England, and dies, April 8. Charles V. (the Wise) succeeds him.

1364. Settlement of the affairs of Brittany on the death of Charles of Blois.

1365. The refusal of the 'tribute' claimed by Urban V. is defended by Wiclif.

1367. Statute of Kilkenny. Invasion of Spain by the Black Prince. Victory of Navarrete (April 3).

1369. The Prince is summoned to Paris, and King Edward III. resumes the title of King of France. Third and last outbreak of the Plague. Death of Queen Philippa.

1370. Massacre at Limoges.

1372. Sea-fight off Rochelle (June 23). Edward III.'s sixth and last invasion of France.

1373. French expedition of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster.

1376. The 'Good Parliament.' The Black Prince dies (June 8). Intrigues of the Duke of Lancaster.

1377. Prince Richard formally invested as successor to his grandfather. Death of Edward III. (June 21).

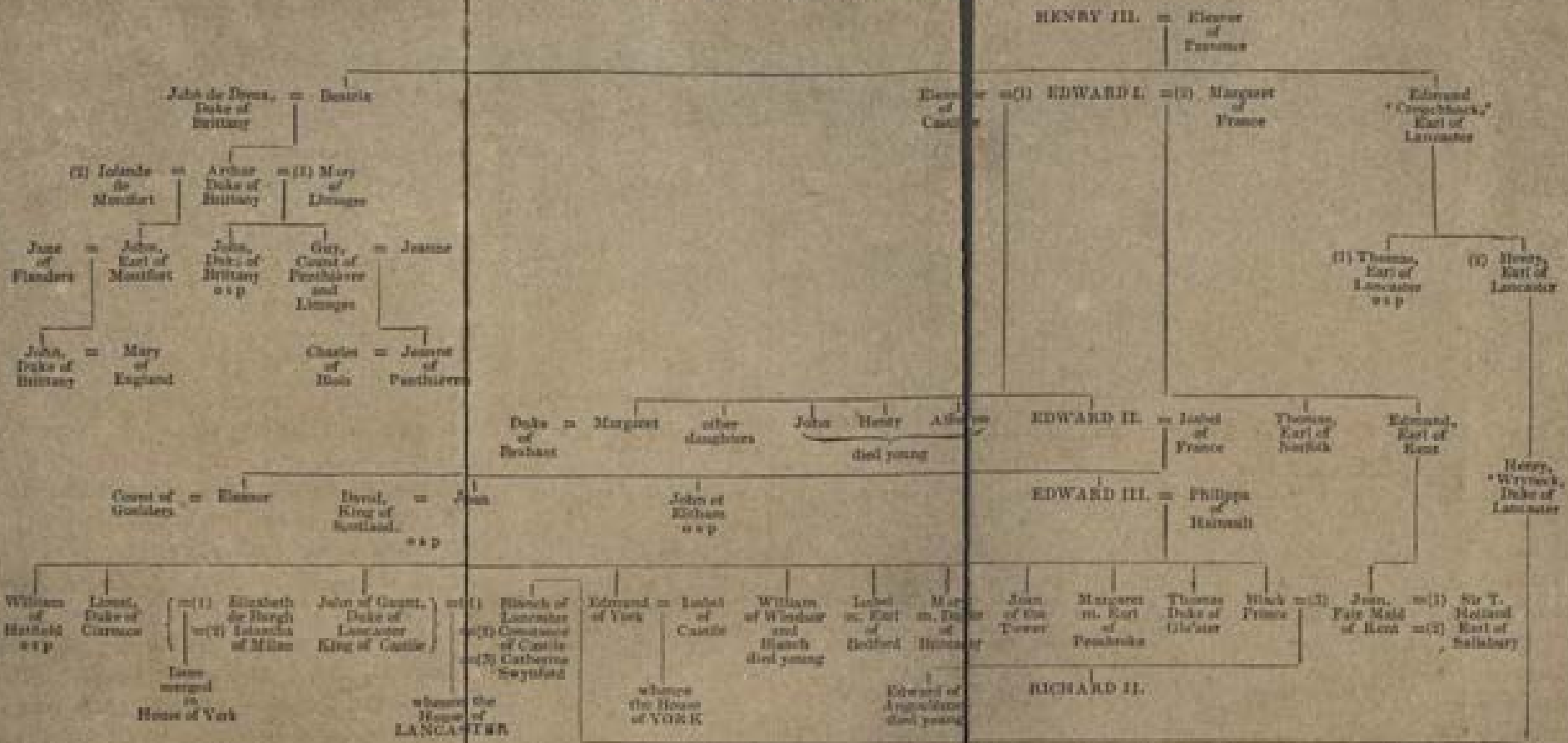
Memorandum on the Money of the Period.

FROM the time of Henry I. to that of Edward I. the pound sterling was legally identical with the pound of silver, 240 silver coins, or pennies, each coin being one *pennyweight*. Under Edward I. the pound sterling and the lb. weight first parted company, the beginning of a system which gave rise to much hardship to the poor, uncertainty to commerce, and temptation to kings. Edward III. first introduced a gold coinage (gold having previously been interchanged, like any other commodity, by weight), and this gave him further opportunities of altering the pound sterling at his pleasure, for the value of the gold money had at one time to be adjusted to the value of the silver, and that of the silver to that of the gold, at another. Thus, in the course of twenty-five years the lb. weight of gold represented 15*l.* in silver money, then 13*l.* 3*s.* 4*d.*, and then 15*l.* again. The lb. weight of silver was coined into 243 pennies in Edward I.'s reign, subsequently into 270, and lastly into 300. It is needless to observe what perplexity these changes introduce into all calculations of prices and comparisons of the relative value of money at different times, even in the same reign. In large money accounts within the kingdom the pound sterling is the unit most frequently named, but it was employed only as 'money of account,' being unrepresented by a single coin. Next came the mark, worth 13*s.* 4*d.*, then the shilling, both also money of account, for the first twelve penny shilling pieces were coined by Henry VIII. Edward III. issued the first groat, or *great* coin, being the largest in use, and passing current for four pennies—silver pennies, for no copper was coined by authority till the reign of James I. The first gold coin which Edward III. issued was the "florence" or florin, of the value of 6*s.* He afterwards coined nobles, rose

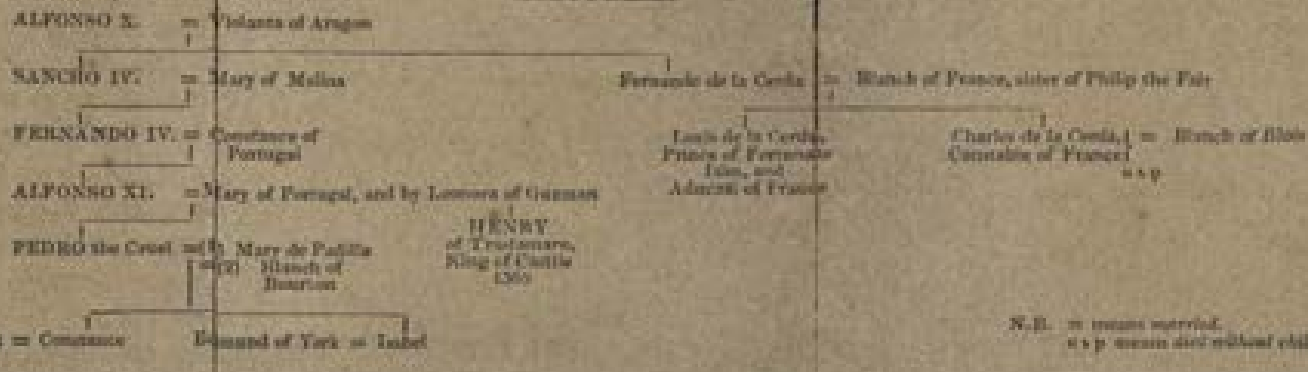
nobles, as they were called, from being stamped with a rose, of half the value of the mark. In international transactions the unit most frequently employed is the gold florin of Florence, equivalent to the gold crown (*escu d'or*) of France, the value of which we may infer with tolerable certainty from the fact that it was the recognised equivalent of Edward III.'s *half-florin*, or 3*s*.

No two authorities are agreed as to the figure which should be employed as a multiplier in order to bring the moneys of the fourteenth century up to their equivalents in value, that is, in purchasing power, in the money of the present day. It probably lies between twelve and fifteen.

ENGLAND AND BRITTANY.


HENRY III. = Eleanor of Provence
John de Dreux, Duke of Brittany = Beatrix
Eleanor of Castile = (1) EDWARD I. = (2) Margaret of France
Edmund "Crouchback," Earl of Lancaster
(2) Iolande de Montfort = Arthur Duke of Brittany = (1) Mary of Limoges
(1) Thomas, Earl of Lancaster o s p
(2) Henry, Earl of Lancaster
Joan of Flanders = John, Earl of Montfort
John, Duke of Brittany o s p
Guy, Count of Penthièvre and Limoges = Jeanne
John, Duke of Brittany = Mary of England
Charles of Blois = Jeanne of Penthièvre
Duke of Brabant = Margaret
other daughters
John
Henry
died young
EDWARD II. = Isabel of France
Thomas, Earl of Norfolk
Edmund, Earl of Kent
Count of Geldres = Eleanor
David, King of Scotland. = Joan
o s p
John of Eltham o s p
EDWARD III. = Philippa of Hainault
Henry, "Wryneck," Duke of Lancaster
William of Hatfield o s p
Lionel, Duke of Clarence
(1) Elizabeth de Burgh
(2) Isabella of Milan
Lionel married in House of York
John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster King of Castile
(1) Blanch of Lancaster
(2) Constance of Castile
(3) Catherine Swynford
whence the House of LANCASTER
Edmund of York = Isabel of Castile
whence the House of YORK
William of Windsor and Blanch died young
Isabel m. Earl of Bedford
Mary m. Duke of Brittany
Edward of Angoulême died young
John of the Tower
Margaret m. Earl of Pembroke
Thomas Duke of Gloucester
Black Prince = (2)
Joan, Fair Maid of Kent = (1) (2) Sir T. Holland Earl of Salisbury
RICHARD II.

CASTILE.


ALFONSO X. = Violanta of Aragon
SANCHO IV. = Mary of Molina
Fernando de la Cerda = Blanch of France, sister of Philip the Fair
FERNANDO IV. = Constance of Portugal
Louis de la Cerda, Prince of Fortunate Isles, and Admiral of France
Charles de la Cerda, = Blanch of Blois Constable of France o s p
ALFONSO XI. = Mary of Portugal, and by Leonora of Guzman
HENRY of Trastamare, King of Castile 1369
PEDRO the Cruel = (1) Mary de Padilla (2) Blanch of Bourbon
John of Gaunt = Constance
Edmund of York = Isabel

N.B. = means married.
o s p means died without children (obit sine prole).

EDWARD THE THIRD.

INTRODUCTION.

EDWARD III. was King of England for a little more than fifty years, having been proclaimed A.D. 1327. January 24, 1327, and dying June 21, 1377.

The backbone of the story of his reign and times is the great Continental war.

This war, though taxing to the utmost the resources of England and France, and illustrated by many brilliant actions of which our countrymen are still justly proud, was ultimately indecisive, and unfruitful in direct results.

In its external aspects it was less like an international struggle in which great issues were involved and important principles at stake, than one of those splendid tournaments in which this the golden age of chivalry, took delight. Preparations are made on a magnificent scale; the contending parties defile, under the eyes of innumerable eager spectators, into the lists; with the blazonry of shield and surcoat, the waving of plume and pennon, the blare of trumpet and clarion. Defiances are interchanged, and after many a ceremonious delay and passing of heralds to and fro, the champions encounter furiously in the shock of battle. But when one of the

combatants has unhorsed his adversary and borne him to the ground, the victor, instead of slaughtering or permanently disabling his prostrate foe, suffers him to rise and bathe his bruises, to call for a fresh horse and lance, and renew the contest. At nightfall, to complete the parallel, the interest slackens, the combatants depart, the spectators disperse, and no more substantial results remain from the splendid and costly pageant, than broken heads and broken lances and reputations lost and won.

Nevertheless, though of secondary importance in the history of the time, the war will unavoidably occupy the greatest amount of space in the following pages; and its leading events, if they do not suggest, at least fall in with, the attempt to distribute the fifty years of the reign into five clearly defined periods of ten years each.

The first decade is marked at its commencement by the formal conclusion of a peace between England and France, and it terminates with the ripening of the quarrel between the two nations, and the completion of the preparations on both sides for war. A.D. 1327–1337.

The next period of ten years opens with the first invasion of France, and winds up with the fourth and greatest invasion, which resulted in the victory of Creci and the surrender of Calais. A.D. 1337–1347.

The beginning of the third decade finds a forced cessation of hostilities throughout Europe, in consequence of the ravages of the Black Death; and its conclusion is marked by the battle of Poitiers and the capture of the French king. A.D. 1347–1357.

The fourth period commences with an indirect consequence of the war—the outbreak of the Jacquerie in France; and takes us down to the battle of Navarrete and the reinstatement of the King of Spain by the Black Prince. A.D. 1357–1367.

The last ten years of the reign are marked by a series

of reverses and disasters, commencing with the illness of the Black Prince, his war-tax and consequent unpopularity in his French duchy; and ending with the loss of almost all the territories which the English had previously possessed, or won during the war, in France. A.D. 1367–1377.

The external history of the whole epoch, so far as its most conspicuous actors were concerned, thus returns, as it were, upon itself; and this is equally true of its several portions. At the end of every ten years or so a great and apparently decisive battle is fought, but the general aspect of affairs is scarcely altered by the event. The same negociations and counter-negociations, the same diplomatic thrusts and parries, the same menaces and courtesies are renewed; and after all we hardly seem to advance a step, any more than in a dream, towards a practical result. A good deal of this is doubtless traceable to the character of the English King himself. His reign was for a long time great and prosperous, in spite of extravagant expenditure, shortsighted legislation, and vacillating foreign policy; because, by his personal prowess, liberality, and splendour, his ready tact, incessant activity, and marvellous good fortune, he carried his people with him, enlisted their sympathy, and commanded their admiration. But, unlike his grandfather, the great Edward I., he lived and laboured for glory and ambition, not for practical or permanent objects. His work and influence were personal and evanescent. No sooner does his vigour begin to decline and his busy and brilliant individuality to fade away out of the foreground, than disasters of various forms come thronging in, and gradually take possession of the scene.

France, though passing through a terrible agony, and apparently the greatest sufferer by the long struggle, was in reality the chief gainer in the end, for her kings were guided throughout by a consistent hereditary policy

which made them keep the single object in view of extinguishing the half, or more than half, independent fiefs of the Crown, and thus consolidating a vast nominal dominion into a compact and united sovereignty.

The Emperor too had a policy quite independent of the dynastic struggle in which he was so long engaged; a policy which brought him into sympathy with the aspirations of the whole German race after social and religious freedom;—the development, namely, of the sources of wealth, in trade, enterprise, and political liberty, and the emancipation of himself and his subjects from the tyranny of the Vatican. He recognised kindred sentiments in the English people, and at first entered warmly into the English alliance. He withdrew from it in despair only when it became evident that local jealousies would make it impossible to carry out his project of so combining the power of England and of the Empire as to compel the submission of the Pope, and the recognition by France of the claims of Edward III. Charles IV., who succeeded Lewis in 1347, and was crowned Emperor in 1354, took no part in European politics. He was in fact a very good ruler of his own kingdom of Bohemia, but he left the interests of the Empire to take care of themselves.

The anarchic condition of the far East of Europe began, towards the close of this epoch, to assume shape and consistency by the growing importance of Moscow, and its recognition as a centre of national life and national aspirations for Tartar-ridden Russia; as well as by the union of the kingdoms of Poland and Hungary under the sceptre of Louis the Great. All along that monarch's South-Eastern frontier the Crescent gleamed, for Northern Greece and Servia and Wallachia were subdued and occupied by the Janissaries of Sultan Amurath the First, who had already established the long-enduring dominion

of the Turk on the ruins of the Roman Empire of the East.

On the northern and southern shores of Europe this was the day of wealthy and powerful trading republics. The rising communities on the Baltic as well as on the Tuscan and Adriatic seaboards enriched themselves by the struggles (to the parties themselves worse than unproductive) of the greater powers, and became the bankers, carriers, purveyors, and clothiers, of the civilised world.

But the main historical interest and importance of the epoch are to be sought below the surface; in the first beginnings of the great religious revolution, which, though it broke up the nominal unity of Christendom, conferred on whole nations the inestimable boon of free access to God, and of a faith in harmony with reason;—they are to be sought in the parallel advance of popular institutions, commercial enterprise, and original literature;—in the decay of feudalism and chivalry, with the simultaneous upgrowth of a great middle class, and a multitude of new ideas and new social and political relations which in their progress and expansion have largely contributed to the formation and development of the Europe of to-day. All these points will be touched upon, more or less in detail, in the following pages, though England will naturally occupy the foreground, and her history determine the greater or less amount of prominence to be given to contemporary continental events.

FIRST DECADE.

A.D. 1327-1337.

CHAPTER I.

FROM THE KING'S ACCESSION TO THE FALL OF MORTIMER.

THE new reign began inauspiciously. The young King was a boy of fourteen, the son and namesake of a sovereign deposed for his folly and vice; from whom he inherited the legacy of a smouldering quarrel with Scotland, and another with France, a chronic rebellion in Ireland, and a thinned, half-starved, depressed, and miserable population at home.

A.D. 1327. Accession of Edward III.

His mother, born Isabel of France, and one of the most odious characters in English history, having deserted her wretched consort, took up her residence, with the heir of the kingdom, in a foreign capital; and there contrived an invasion of England which resulted in the dethronement of the reigning King, and, ultimately, in his cold-blooded assassination. Her chief aider and abettor in this undertaking was Roger Mortimer, an expatriated rebel against her husband's authority, with whom she formed an intimacy the nature of which is hardly doubtful; and who, by the successful issue of the enterprise, found himself in a position wherein he was able for a time to defy the laws, and gratify to his heart's content its three ruling passions of covetousness, vanity, and vindictiveness.

At the time when Edward III. was proclaimed, his unhappy father lay a prisoner in Kenilworth Castle. As

the young King refused to accept the crown without the sanction and goodwill of his predecessor, the farce was enacted of sending a Parliamentary deputation to Kenilworth, to receive the 'voluntary' resignation of the fallen monarch. When the commissioners arrived, he was led in to meet them in a plain black gown, and, the object of their coming having been explained, he wept and said, 'It grieves me much that I have deserved so little of my people, and I humbly beg pardon of all present; but since it cannot be otherwise, I thank you for choosing my eldest son to succeed me.' The steward of the royal household then broke his staff of office, as was customary on a king's death; proclamation was made that all people were released from their allegiance to 'Edward of Carnarvon,' and the commissioners returned to London, amid the rejoicings of the populace, to assist at the coronation of Edward III.

The King's youth and the unscrupulous ambition of Isabel and the partner of her guilt made him a passive instrument in their hands. They assumed a more than royal authority, appropriated to themselves the estates of the Despensers confiscated in the last reign, and induced the Parliament to assign so large a dowry to the ex-Queen, that 'hardly one-third part of the revenues of the crown lands were left for the use of the King.'

Immediately after the ceremony of the coronation, 'the King's peace' having been duly proclaimed, the Great Charter was confirmed, for the first of thirteen times in this reign. The Parliament then proceeded to appoint the Earl of Lancaster, with three other earls, four bishops, and four barons, to be guardians and counsellors of the young King during his minority. Mortimer was not one of these, which may perhaps be accounted for partly by his being still under the sentence of attainder passed upon all who had been of

Council of Regency.

'the quarrel of the Earl of Lancaster' executed in the last reign; but, (in addition to the odium created by his arrogance and rapacity,) there seems good reason to believe that he was beginning to be regarded with suspicion and dislike on account of his relations with the now doubly unfaithful Queen of Edward II. Most of the members of the Council, however, belonged to the Queen's party; and by means of their influence, and an unscrupulous disregard of the intentions of Parliament, Mortimer and Isabel were enabled to carry things with such a high hand that 'no one dared open his mouth for the good of the King or of the kingdom.'

Edward was crowned on February 1, and on the same day was admitted by his cousin Lancaster to knighthood, an order to which, in those days, even kings were proud to belong; and the contemporary ideal of which order he so well fulfilled throughout his career, that he claims to rank as the first knight of Europe in his day, with perhaps a less questionable right than that upon which George IV. aspired to be the first gentleman of Europe in his. No time was lost by the Council of Regency in securing the kingdom against aggression, by concluding a treaty with France, and issuing orders for the due observance of the thirteen years' truce made with Scotland in 1323. But, as will shortly be seen, neither of these precautions was of any avail. For the aged warrior, Robert Bruce, hearing of the deposition of Edward II. and the accession of a boy king, could not resist the temptation thus offered of reasserting the independence of Scotland. No pains were spared by the English Government to avert hostilities, but the Scotch were determined on war; and at Easter, 1327, their king sent a formal defiance to Edward, declaring that he would 'enter England and burn it, as he had done before the battle of Bannockburn.' Upon this, a

War with Scotland.

proclamation was issued in King Edward's name, summoning all the tenants of the Crown to meet him in arms at Newcastle on May 19, and a supporting fleet was ordered to sail to Skinburness, a port in the north of Cumberland. While the King was on his way to the rendezvous, news reached him that the Scots had already entered English territory, and were ravaging the county of Cumberland, 24,000 strong, under Randolph Earl of Murray, and Sir James Douglas the darling of Scottish story,—the Bruce himself being too ill with leprosy to lead his army into the field. During the six weeks that King Edward's forces remained at York, conflicting rumours as to the position of the Scotch army were brought to the English camp. Hearing that they were gathering in force at Carlisle, Edward issued orders that all the able-bodied men of the 'wapentake of Holdernesse and the town of Beverley' should be marshalled in arms; but attaching more credence to a report that they were laying waste the county of Northumberland, he advanced northward himself to the city of Durham, and two days' march beyond. All this time he could gain no information of the present whereabouts of the enemy, though where they had already been was only too evident from the ruins they left on their track; for it soon appeared that while the well-equipped English army, 62,000 strong, was blindly pushing forward in search of them, the nimble Scots had given them the slip, and were actually in the rear of their pursuers.

Description of the Scotch soldiery.

The army of the Scots was well adapted for marauding warfare. Every man was mounted on a rough, hardy galloway, and carried with him strapped to his saddle all that he wanted for the campaign. He was not particular as to changes of raiment, but he brought with him a bag of oatmeal, with an iron plate to bake it on, and he knew how to cook the flesh of

the English cattle in cauldrons made of their own skins. Thus lightly and independently accoutred, the Scots could march two miles to the English one, and their tactics were to move rapidly from place to place, doing all the mischief they could, and never risking a collision with the main body of the enemy.

Finding it hopeless to overtake the Scots or bring them to bay, Edward determined to gain by a rapid march the northern bank of the Tyne, and intercept their army on its return. Baggage and stores were sent back to Durham, each man taking with him no more than his arms and a single loaf of bread. They started at midnight, and marched till sunrise and all through the following day, and crossed the Tyne at Haydon as the sun set. For seven long days they halted there, though their saddles were rotted, and their bread sodden by incessant rain. On their forced march they had been unable to bring with them any protection against the weather, and they had nothing for it but to lie down and sleep in their armour on the soaking ground. The troops were on the point of breaking out in open mutiny when Edward, recrossing the river to better quarters, proclaimed the reward of knighthood and one hundred pounds a year to anyone who would bring intelligence of the position of the enemy. On the fourth day a Yorkshire esquire, Thomas of Rokeby, rode into the English camp, and told the King how, venturing too near the Scottish army, he had been taken prisoner and carried before Murray and Douglas; who, on hearing of the reward proclaimed by the English, had acquitted him of all ransom and sent him to Edward with the message that 'they were as hot to fight as he to find them.' Rokeby then described the position of the Scots, posted some three leagues away on a hill sloping down to the right bank of the Wear. At daybreak Edward drew out his army

'in a fair meadow to refresh themselves' before the march, and himself withdrew, with a number of his knights, to a neighbouring abbey, to confess and receive absolution before the battle which now seemed imminent.

When the Scotch saw the Southerners approaching, they drew out in three 'battles,' on foot, at the bottom of the hill, leaving so narrow a strip between their front and the river, that had the enemy succeeded in forcing the passage across they would have found no room to form on the other side. By this time the English had drawn so near to the bank that each army could plainly see the devices on the shields of the men of the opposite host, and Edward sent a herald to the Scotch commanders to say that if they wanted to fight he would retire far enough from the river to give them room to marshal their array, or, if they liked it better, they might draw back and give him room to form on the southern side. It might be thought that this singular proposal, so characteristic of the age of chivalry, could have been made only in those romantic times; but the readers of Herodotus will remember that some eighteen centuries before, the bold Queen Tomyris offered precisely the same alternative to Cyrus, 'if he wanted to make trial of the Massagetæ.'

Edward's proposal to the Scotch commanders.

Douglas was for accepting the proposal, but, overruled by the less 'chivalrous' or more prudent Murray, he sent back a message that 'the Scotch lords were better advised than to follow the counsels of an enemy; that they had slain the English and burnt their villages, and that now was the time for the English to chastise them if they could.' Notwithstanding this bravado the Scots knew that it would go hard with them if they were intercepted by the superior forces of the enemy, and trusting to their great rapidity of movement, they suddenly decamped at the dead of night, and moved farther up the river, choos-

ing a new position, in Stanhope Park, 'the hunting-ground of the Bishop of Durham,' from which it was equally hazardous to attempt to dislodge them. The enemy followed, and here again the two armies stood facing each other for fifteen days more, the English suffering much privation, but the Scots feeling quite at home in this rough campaigning. From every midnight till morning the latter 'kept up such a noise with perpetual and universal shoutings and cries and winding of horns most dismally, that it seemed as if all the devils had come to carry them off.' On one of these nights Douglas planned, and all but carried out, an adventure, the wild and successful audacity of which recalls to mind the midnight raid of Gideon on the host of the Midianites. Putting himself at the head of 200 well-mounted men-at-arms, he crossed the river below the English camp, and stealing upon and slaying the out-watchers, charged suddenly into the midst of the sleeping army, shouting, 'A Douglas! a Douglas! Die, ye English thieves!' Three hundred men were slaughtered half asleep, and Douglas himself made straight for the tent of the young king, the ropes of which he cut with his own sword before he galloped off safe with most of his men in the darkness and confusion. The next evening there was a rumour of another night attack, and the English army stood under arms all through the hours of darkness. At daybreak two trumpeters were brought in, from whom they learned that the Scotch had decamped and crossed the river in the middle of the night and were now many leagues off on the way home to Scotland. Such was the suddenness of their departure and the plenty of their supplies, that the English found in the deserted camp 500 oxen and deer already killed, 300 cauldrons of broth cooking in undressed skins stretched across stakes, and 1,000 spits with the meat on them ready

Night attack on the English camp.

The Scotch retreat.

for roasting. Five poor English prisoners were discovered tied to stakes, still alive, but with their legs broken.

Pursuit was, of course, hopeless, and Edward had to withdraw unsuccessful from his first expedition, which certainly deserved better success, for the Scotch were truce breakers and aggressors, and he, though outwitted and worsted in tactics, had the best of the rights of the quarrel. It would be well if the same could be said for him in the long subsequent struggle, wherein the Scots were fighting bravely for independence under a king of their choice, and Edward was putting forth the whole strength of England to force upon them a Balliol instead of a Bruce.

The odium of the failure fell chiefly on Mortimer, by whose secret influence it was thought that the English leaders were kept back from a more vigorous and daring course of action.

The Scotch had been living at free quarters in the enemy's country during the campaign, but to the English the expedition was as costly as it was unsuccessful. Besides the expenses of his own troops, Edward owed 14,000*l.*—a sum equivalent to at least 200,000*l.* in our day—to Sir John of Hainault for his co-operation in the campaign, and now began to feel for the first time the want of money which beset him so frequently, and drove him to such questionable expedients in later years. He first borrowed of the Bardi, or Longobardi, a Florentine banking company settled in London, who gave their name to Lombard Street. When they failed in 1345—an event which, Villani tells us, plunged all Florence in distress, and which was chiefly owing to Edward's unpaid debt to them of 900,000 gold florins—he betook himself to the 'brethren of the Hanseatic Steelyard,' an association of German traders who had established themselves on the banks of the Thames

Edward begins to borrow money.

in the reign of Henry III. By way of security on the present occasion he gave the Bardi an order on the collectors of customs at Sandwich and Southampton, and directed his treasurer to pawn the royal jewels if the amount in his hands proved insufficient to pay his debt to Sir John of Hainault.

The next care of the Government was to bring about, if possible, a permanent peace with Scotland. After some preliminary negociations, a Parliament was summoned to meet at York, for thus early in his career the young King began the system of taking the advice of his parliament on all important questions. This was a remarkable characteristic of his reign, and doubtless one of the secrets of his success in carrying with him the support and sympathy of his subjects in many of his less defensible undertakings. On the present occasion he wrote to Robert Bruce as 'by the grace of God the illustrious King of the Scots,' to say that, acting on the advice of 'the prelates, nobles, earls, barons, and commons of his kingdom,' he offered to enter into peace with him, abandoning all claims over the realm of Scotland. This overture was accepted and a treaty of peace signed by both kings, and confirmed by Parliament on April 24, 1328.

Peace with Scotland.

A.D. 1328.

The importance of this treaty can hardly be overrated. It was a virtual abandonment of the claims founded on Edward I.'s conquest of Scotland in 1290, and an acknowledgment of the legitimacy of the Bruce dynasty. The principal agreements were as follows:—that the English king should give up, at once and for ever, his feudal claim to the overlordship of Scotland, and restore the 'Ragman Rolls,' consisting of thirty-five skins of parchment, on which Balliol and other Scottish nobles had signed their names to a document admitting that claim; that the

sacred stone on which the kings of Scotland had been crowned at Scone, and other national heirlooms taken away by Edward I., should be given back; and, on the part of the Scotch, that the estates of certain nobles who had forfeited them by taking the English side should be restored; that Bruce should pay 20,000*l.* in three annual instalments to England, and finally that his son David, the heir of the Scottish crown, then in his sixth year, should be betrothed to the Princess Joan of England, King Edward's sister, a child of about the same age.

The above stipulations were, in the main, faithfully carried out, and David was affianced four months later to Joan; but dangerous riots prevented the removal of the coronation stone, which is still to be seen in Westminster Abbey, and a delay, of disastrous consequences, as will presently appear, took place in the restoration of the forfeited estates.

The balance of advantage was so much in favour of Scotland that the peace, regarded as humiliating, and all but treasonous, by the English, immensely aggravated the unpopularity of Mortimer and the Queen, who were supposed to be its authors, and for whose private use it was suspected that the money payment to be made by the Scottish king was intended.

It was during the settlement of the stipulations of this treaty, in the autumn of 1327, that the murder of Edward II. took place at Berkeley Castle. It is tolerably certain that there was at the time no public suspicion of foul play: but when, on his trial in 1330, Mortimer was accused of having commanded the King's assassination, he admitted the truth of the charge. Murder of Edward II.

Shortly after the return from the Scotch campaign, an embassy was sent to Count William of Hainault, to demand his daughter Philippa in marriage for King Edward, to whom she was already The King's Marriage.

affianced. He and his betrothed were within the prohibited degrees, being both great-grandchildren of Philip III. of France; but the Pope having granted a dispensation, the future queen set sail under the escort of her uncle Sir John and the commissioners sent from England to fetch her. The marriage took place at York on January 24, 1328. The bridegroom was between fifteen and sixteen, and the bride only fourteen years of age; but the pleasures and cares of real life began earlier and ended earlier in those days than in ours. It would appear that in the Middle Ages the deaths of a great portion of the English nobility, even when due to natural causes, took place under the age of forty; and their eldest sons, though commonly the offspring of very early marriages, frequently became wards of the Crown by reason of their minority. The Black Prince was born in his father's eighteenth year, and fought the battle of Creci when he was himself but sixteen years of age.

Within a fortnight after the royal wedding. Charles the Fair, the last of the Capetian kings of France, died, an event full of disaster for that country and for England. No sooner had it occurred than Edward III. put forth a presumptuous and unfounded claim to the French crown, which involved the two countries in a war of a century's duration, and sowed the seeds of a national antipathy which has not yet ceased to bear poisonous fruit. As the war, however, did not break out for ten years later, it may be as well to reserve the account of this claim and its consequences till that part of the history has been reached.

A more immediate and menacing danger arose from the ambition, hitherto successful, and the tyranny, hitherto unchecked and unpunished, of the infamous Mortimer, and the still more infamous Isabel. Their guilty relations to one another had now become notorious; and Mortimer, sensible of the growing hatred

Mortimer.

of the people as well as of the nobles, determined to surround himself with a body-guard of armed retainers to overawe Parliament, and, by a high-handed exhibition of power, to give the barons a visible proof that the greatest and noblest in the land were not secure against his vengeance.

Edward had summoned a Parliament to meet at New Sarum (now Salisbury), and the nobles had been forbidden in the King's name to attend it with an armed retinue, an illegal but not uncommon custom in those times. Mortimer, in defiance of this prohibition, appeared at Salisbury with a large armed force, and the princes of the blood, the Earls of Kent, Norfolk and Lancaster, hearing of this on their way, and suspecting his designs, stopped short at Winchester. When the rest of the Parliament were sitting in debate, Mortimer broke into their chamber, and threatened them with loss of life and limb if they attempted to dispute his pleasure. As soon as the session was over, a confederacy was formed by the barons, with whom the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishops of London and Winchester took part, to rid themselves of a tyranny now become insupportable. They met at St. Paul's and issued a manifesto, setting forth the charges against Mortimer, which were only too notorious and well-founded, and everything promised success; but at the critical moment Kent and Norfolk lost their courage, faltered, and withdrew, leaving Lancaster unsupported. Mortimer easily persuaded the young King that it was against the royal authority the confederates were plotting, and it was only through the intercession of the Archbishop that they were allowed to make submission and save their lives at the sacrifice of half their lands. Then Mortimer, elated by his success, and wishing to remove a man whose amiability, popularity, and influence made him a pecu-

A.D. 1329.

liarly odious rival, determined to compass the death of the Earl of Kent, the King's uncle, by practising on the simplicity of his character and drawing him into the net of high treason. With this object in view he caused a rumour to be circulated that King Edward II. was not really dead, but confined and hidden away in Corfe Castle in Dorsetshire. The Earl, deceived by this report, went himself to Corfe Castle to make enquiries. The governor, a creature of Mortimer's, refused him admission to his brother, but promised that if the Earl would put what he wished to say in writing, he would himself convey the letter to the King. This letter, which of course was soon in the hands of Mortimer, contained all that was necessary for his treacherous purpose; but the Earl of Kent had committed himself still more deeply by consulting the Pope at Avignon, and receiving his sanction to a plan for releasing the deposed King. It so happened that a Parliament was sitting at Winchester when the fatal letter came into Mortimer's hands, and as his opponents had been afraid to take their seats therein, it will easily be understood that when the Earl of Kent was arraigned before it and charged with a treason which he could not deny, he was straightway convicted, and sentenced to lose his head. Mortimer, fearing lest the King should relent towards his uncle, hurried on the execution, which took place the following day, but not before the evening, for so great was the general resentment against the malice and treachery of which the Earl was a victim, that no one could be induced to undertake the office of executioner; till at length a convict was found in the Marshalsea willing to carry out the cruel sentence on condition that his own life should be spared. After this triumph over justice and humanity, Mortimer's arrogance and tyranny knew no bounds or restraint. Some of his

Execution of the Earl of Kent.

A.D. 1330.

opponents, under pretext of their complicity in the late treasonous attempt, were thrown into prison, and others assailed with prosecutions, till at last no one felt secure in person or in purse. The estates of the Earl of Kent were seized for Mortimer's youngest son, Geoffrey; the greater part of the vast accumulations of the Despensers in the last reign were, as we have seen, appropriated to himself. He kept more than regal state; he held tournaments and round tables, and from his reckless extravagance, and affectation of all the external vanities of royalty, his own son gave him the name of 'the King of Folly.' But his hour was come at last, and his degradation and punishment were reserved for the hand of the young king whom he had so deeply injured.

Fall of Mortimer.

At the birth of his son and heir (June 1330) Edward was still a boy in years, but from this moment he would seem to have thrown off the dependence and simplicity of boyhood, and to have awakened to a keen and painful consciousness of the contemptible position to which he had suffered himself to be brought by an arrogant subject and a depraved mother. Relying on the universal hatred of which Mortimer was the object, he resolved to get possession of his person and bring him to justice for his crimes, without being over-scrupulous as to the means employed. But this was no easy matter, for the King was surrounded by the emissaries of Mortimer, who reported his every word and action to their master. However, letting the young Lord Montacute into his confidence, he secretly arranged with him that they should take advantage of a Parliament about to be held at Nottingham to put their plan of seizing Mortimer into execution. But Mortimer and Queen Isabel, suspecting apparently that some mischief was brewing, were beforehand with them in getting to Nottingham and taking possession of the Castle; and though, when Edward

arrived, they permitted him to take up his quarters in the keep, they limited his retinue to three or four servants. So well had their precautions been taken that it seemed impossible for the youthful confederates to accomplish their object without letting the Governor of the Castle into the secret, and securing his co-operation. He, however, at once entered cordially into the scheme, though it was not possible for him to admit an armed force at midnight as the King proposed, because the keys of the fortress were always placed under Queen Isabel's pillow. He was prepared, however, with a better plan. A king who lived in times long past, providing against some now forgotten danger, had made a subterranean passage leading from the donjon keep into a cave in the hill-side, the entrance to which is still shown on the west of the Castle and known by the name of Mortimer's Hole. On the evening of October 19 the King and his associates rode out of Nottingham into the country to divert suspicion, but at midnight they returned, crept through the subterranean passage, overpowered the guards, and broke into a chamber adjoining that of the ex-Queen, in which Mortimer was holding consultation with the Bishop of Lincoln. A struggle ensued, in which he was soon overpowered and made a prisoner, the Queen meanwhile shrieking from her chamber, 'Fair son, fair son, O spare the gentle Mortimer!'

The King, emboldened by the success of this spirited and hazardous enterprise, seized the next morning on several of Mortimer's adherents, and sent them off to the Tower of London to await their trial. The same day he issued a proclamation in which he threw himself, according to his wont, upon public opinion, stating that the affairs of the kingdom had been dishonourably administered during his minority, that he had arrested Mortimer and the other

The King begins to govern as well as reign.

guilty counsellors who had abused their position and his youth, and meant to bring them to justice; and, finally, that from henceforth he took the government of the kingdom into his own hands. A Parliament was summoned to meet at Westminster, at the bar of which Edward invited all who had any cause of complaint arising out of the 'evil practices of those who had been his ministers' to state their case, and promised them redress of grievances and better government for the future. Before this Parliament—that is to say, before 'his peers,' the earls and barons assembled—for the Commons, though present, took no part in the proceedings—Mortimer was arraigned. The charges brought against him were that he had usurped regal power, taking the government out of the hands of the Council of Regency,—that he had trepanned the Earl of Kent into a treasonous conspiracy, —that he had come with an armed force to the Salisbury Parliament,—that he had taken exorbitant grants of the public domains,—appropriated to his own use 20,000 marks of the money paid by the Scots,—and that he had procured the death of the late King. 'The earls, barons and peers,' as judges of Parliament, condemned him, without trial, upon the 'notoriety of the facts,' to be 'drawn and hanged as a traitor.' This sentence was, some twenty-four years later, declared to be illegal, but it was now carried into effect, and Mortimer was accordingly drawn and hanged on the third day after, at 'The Elms,' since called Tyburn. A like arbitrary judgment was at the same time passed upon others of Mortimer's abettors, and upon Maltravers, the late King's custodian, for whose apprehension a large reward was offered. His colleague Berkeley, arraigned before Parliament for having been concerned in the King's assassination, 'put himself upon his country,' and was acquitted by a jury of all complicity therein. Of the two actual assassins, Ogle and Gournay,

the fate of the former is unknown ; Gournay, after many escapes, was hunted down at Naples, but died miserably of disease as they were dragging him back to England.

The Queen Dowager.

The Queen Dowager, who, as was tacitly assumed, had lived on terms of dishonourable intimacy with Mortimer, and had been a sharer with him in the guilt of her husband's death, was placed in secure but respectful captivity at Castle Rising, in Norfolk ; three thousand pounds were assigned for her annual maintenance, and during the remaining twenty-eight years of her life she was occasionally visited by the King, and permitted to appear as a spectator when jousts were held at the castle.

Means taken to repress social disorder.

With the fall of Mortimer the reign of Edward III. virtually begins. One of his first acts was to issue writs to the judges, commanding them to administer justice boldly and impartially, without respect of persons or regard of arbitrary orders. He also exacted from his powerful and lawless barons a solemn promise that they would break off all connexion with the robbers, thieves, plunderers, and murderers by whom the country was overrun, and who were not uncommonly under the protection of the great landowners. They beset the high roads, seized and ransomed travellers, and surrounded the courts of justice to intimidate the judges. The local magistrates who had been appointed to 'keep the peace' during Mortimer's sway, were unable to cope with these ruffians, and on one occasion the King had to put himself at the head of a body of soldiers to attack and disperse them. The 'Statute of Winchester,' passed in the reign of Edward I., embodied the whole police system of those days, and the most important principle which it adopted and confirmed was that of fixing on each neighbourhood the responsibility of crimes committed in it. In accordance with the spirit of this

A.D. 1331.

statute, the leading men of each county were now charged with the duty of assembling the people by 'Hu and Crie,' and pursuing the malefactors 'from vill to vill, from hundred to hundred;' while it was further enacted that the King himself should go from county to county to see that this duty was done. Special commissioners had also been authorized in Edward I.'s reign to supplement the ordinary machinery for the preservation of the peace. These were called 'Courts of Traylbaston,' a word which in old French means *drawing the stick*, and properly designates the crime itself, and not the means of its prevention or punishment. These courts were specially instituted to suppress what we should call club law, and did good service during the first twenty years of Edward III.'s reign. In 1347 they were superseded by the formal establishment of 'Keepers of the Peace,' who, fourteen years later, had large powers granted them, and began to be called 'Justices of the Peace,' as at present, and to hold their sessions four times a year (36 Edward III. 1. 12). But even members of Parliament travelling up to London were inclined to rely on themselves for protection or redress, and frequently came provided with 'swords, long knives, actons (or flexible cuirasses) and haubergeons,' so that it was found necessary in the sitting of 1332, to enact that none but earls and barons, and those duly authorised to keep the King's peace, should enter London armed. While these more formidable elements of disorder were thus sternly repressed, the petty disturbers of the peace were not forgotten, for we find among the statutes of this session an enactment drawn up, as usual in grave Latin, to the effect that 'little boys shall not be permitted to play at bars or other games,' or to amuse themselves by 'knocking off the hats of passers-by, in the neighbourhood of the Palace of Westminster.'

FIRST DECADE.—A.D. 1327-1337.

CHAPTER II.

FROM THE FIRST INVASION OF SCOTLAND TO THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE FRENCH WAR.

IT will be remembered that in the spring of 1328 peace had been made with Scotland, on terms so favourable to that country that it seemed unlikely that its continuance would be endangered by any neglect or dilatoriness on the side of the Scots to fulfil their part of the stipulations. But King Robert Bruce, who was now old and ailing, found it impossible or inexpedient to enforce the clauses pledging him to restore to their former owners the forfeited estates of the English nobles within the Scotch border. Before this part of the contract had been fulfilled he died, in 1329, and left his son David, a child of seven years old, under the regency of Randolph, Earl of Murray, his old companion in arms. But still no steps were taken, notwithstanding repeated remonstrances on the part of the English Government, and the admission on the Regent's part of the justice of the demand, for the cession of the forfeited estates. At last the great barons of the north determined to take the matter into their own hands, and right themselves by force of arms; for they knew that King Edward was reluctant to break the peace, partly because, had he done so within four years, he would by agreement have forfeited £20,000 to the Pope, and partly on account of his recent alliance with the young King of Scotland. Lord Beaumont, a powerful noble in the North of England, who claimed the Scotch Earldom of Buchan,

A.D. 1332. War with Scotland.

had from the first opposed the treaty, and thereby incurring the hatred of Mortimer, had left his country and now resided in France. There he had fallen in with Edward Balliol, son of the ex-King of Scotland, and thinking that the young exile would be a useful instrument in his hands for the recovery of his own rights, Lord Beaumont brought him over to England and procured him an interview with the King; in which Balliol, after the fashion of those days, offered, on condition of Edward's assisting him to gain the throne of Scotland, to hold that country as a fief under the English crown. So far from giving him assistance or encouragement, the King refused to allow any forces destined for an invasion of Scotland to march over English ground, and straightway issued strict orders to the guardian of the Scotch Marches to prevent the passage of Balliol's troops across the frontier. He had taken no steps, however, to check the levying and equipment of forces in the northern counties, and an army of 3,300 men was before long prepared to take the field under Balliol and the confederated English nobles. The invaders took ship at Ravenspur, a harbour near Spurn Head, in Yorkshire, famous in after years as the landing-place of Henry IV.'s invasion, but now long since buried in the sea. They made for and safely reached Kinghorn in Fifeshire, where the undisciplined crowd which flocked to oppose their disembarkation were soon put to flight by the showers of arrows poured upon them from the English ships. They then marched westward by Dunfermline, underneath Perth, and finally took up a strong position in the heart of the country, with the river Earn in their front.

Just before this crisis, the wise and capable Regent, Randolph, Earl of Murray, had died, and the great Sir James Douglas, having gone with King Robert's heart to offer it at the shrine of the Holy Sepulchre, had perished

on his way, in conflict with the Moors of Spain. The regency had devolved upon the Earl of Mar, a man wanting both in energy and in military capacity; but so strong was the national antipathy to Balliol as representing the idea of English supremacy, that Mar found no difficulty in bringing an army of 40,000 men into the field against him. He drew up over against the enemy on the northern bank of the Earn, on Dupplin Moor, while the Earl of March, with forces scarcely inferior to the Regent's, threatened the flank of the little army of the invaders. Balliol, however, was not wanting in valour or generalship, and there were, as usual, traitors in the Scotch army, one of whom led the English, by a ford which he knew, safe across the river in the darkness of the night. They threw themselves upon the scattered, over-secure, and ill-sentinelled camp of the enemy with such a sudden and furious onslaught, that the huge Scottish army broke up into a panic-stricken and disorganised crowd and were slaughtered like sheep, the number of the slain four times exceeding that of the whole of Balliol's army, which escaped with the loss of thirty men. The invaders now took possession of Perth, which the Earl of March forthwith surrounded by land and water, and thought to starve into submission; but Balliol's ships broke through the blockade on the Tay, and the besiegers, despairing of success, marched off and disbanded without striking another blow.

Battle of Dupplin Moor, Aug. 12.

Scotland having been thus subdued by a handful of men, the nobles one by one came to make their submission. Young King David and his affianced bride were sent over to France for security, and Edward Balliol was crowned King at Scone on September 24, 1332, two months after his disembarkation in Scotland.

Edward Balliol crowned King of Scotland.

As Balliol was thus actual (*de facto*) King of Scotland,

Edward could now form an alliance with him without a breach of the treaty; and there seemed to be many arguments in favour of espousing his cause. The young Bruce and his dynasty represented the troublesome spirit of Scottish independence, and were closely allied with France, whose king, as will be seen, lost no opportunity of stimulating and supporting the party of resistance to England. Balliol, on the other hand, admitted in a secret despatch to Edward that the success of the expedition was owing to that King's friendly non-intervention, and the aid of his subjects; offered to hold Scotland *as his man*, doing him homage for it as an English fief; and, treating the princess Joan's hastily formed union with David as a mere engagement, proposed to marry her himself instead. The King, as always, even on less important issues than the present, consulted his Parliament, laying the question before them in the following curious form :—'Lequel il se devoit trere vers Escose en clamant le demeigne de meisme la terre, ou de soi faire parti à prendre l'avantage d'aver en service, come ses auncestres avoient, ou la value,' *i.e.* 'whether he should treat with Scotland claiming the land as his own domain, or elect to take the advantage of having it in service as his ancestors had done, or (to take) its value.' This being an affair of high national interest, all the estates of the realm, the earls, barons, prelates, the clergy, the knights, and the commons, were invited to give their opinion upon it, each estate deliberating separately according to the custom of those times. The attendance was thin and the season late, and so they pleaded the importance of the question as a reason for deferring its discussion till Parliament should have reassembled after Christmas.

Balliol in the meanwhile, having dismissed the greater part of his English auxiliaries, was lying unsuspicious of danger at Annan, when his camp was attacked in the

middle of the night by a strong body of cavalry under Murray, son of the wise Regent, and Douglas, brother of the great Sir James. The entrenchments were stormed in the darkness; noble, vassal and retainer were slaughtered before they were able to organise any resistance, and Balliol himself barely escaped with his life across the English border.

Balliol surprised and driven out of Scotland.

The English Parliament met at York in January, and after a week's deliberation on the question under its new complications, agreed in recommending that the advice of the Pope and of the French king should be taken. This, as may be imagined, was not very acceptable counsel to Edward, especially as, in his mind, to attempt the reinstatement of Balliol on the terms which that adventurer had offered during his short-lived tenure of royalty, was already a foregone conclusion. The term of four years within which breach of the treaty on Edward's part would have involved the forfeit to the Pope had now expired, and the recommencement by the Scots of their old depredations on the English border supplied him with a fair pretext for renewing hostilities. The Parliament, notwithstanding Edward's disregard of their advice, granted him as a subsidy towards the expenses of the war a fifteenth on the personal estates of the nobility and gentry, and a fifteenth on the value of 'moveables' in the boroughs. But now for the first time, when voting this subsidy, they took the step of petitioning for a redress of grievances, a preliminary which from this date onward became a constant, if not a formal, condition of all money grants to the sovereign. On this occasion they prayed that 'the King would henceforth live of his own, without grieving his subjects by illegal taxes,' or by the worse exactions of his 'purveyors,' who claimed the right of purchasing goods for the King's use at a price of their

A.D. 1333.

Parliament grants a subsidy.

own fixing, and paying for them by 'tallies,' or orders for cash, too often carried in vain by vendors to an empty exchequer.

The 'King's own,' that is the ordinary revenue in times of peace, is roughly estimated by the latest and best authorities at £65,000 a year.

Instructions were now issued to the Earl Marshal for a levy of troops from England, Wales, and Ireland, to meet the King at Newcastle, and leave was given to the inhabitants of Northumberland, Cumberland, and Durham to drive their flocks southward, out of the reach of Scotch marauders, and pasture them in the royal forests.

Edward's first invasion of Scotland.

Berwick-on-Tweed was the key of Scotland. Its commanding border position and massive fortress made it, like Ramah of Benjamin in ancient times, a constant object of acquisition in war, and a frequent scene of international struggles. Edward I. had taken it in 1296, but it was recovered from his successor by Robert Bruce, who had doubled the strength of its fortifications, and occupied it with a strong Scottish garrison. Edward marched straight upon Berwick, and commenced a siege which, after two months of fierce assault and gallant resistance, was turned into a blockade. The garrison, reduced to extremities, made an agreement to surrender on July 20, if not previously relieved either 'by an army, or by a force of 200 strong cutting their way through the besiegers' lines without a loss of more than thirty men.' On July 19, to the delight of the beleaguered fortress, Sir Archibald Douglas, now Regent of Scotland in Bruce's name, and in succession to the ill-starred Earl of Mar, appeared before Berwick at the head of an army originally destined for a raid into Northumberland.

The Scotch considerably outnumbered the investing force, but the English were strongly posted to the north

of the town on Halidon Hill, a position which, as all they had to do was to prevent the Scotch from entering and relieving Berwick, they were in no hurry to abandon. It had been Sir Archibald's intention to adhere to the traditional tactics which his countrymen had found so efficacious in former campaigns, and, avoiding a general engagement, to harass the enemy by perpetual skirmishing; but on this occasion, partly on account of the reckless impetuosity of his followers, and partly from the necessity of taking the offensive in order to relieve the garrison, he determined to push across a morass which protected the enemy's front, and advance up the hill against them. The English army remained immoveable till the Scots had waded through the marsh and were breasting the hill. This was the moment for which the archers had been waiting, and as soon as the leading files had advanced within range of their shot, they poured down upon them so sudden and irresistible a storm of arrows that they wavered, broke, and fell back upon the rear ranks, throwing them into such disorder that even flight became impossible. Then the English men-at-arms bore down upon the rout, and the Welsh and Irish irregulars rushed in upon the flanks, armed with their long knives; and such bloody carnage ensued, and so many knights and nobles fell that it was the saying of the day that 'the Scotch wars were over at last,' for there was not a man left in Scotland who had skill to muster an army or lead it against the enemy.

Battle of Halidon Hill, July 19.

The immediate result of the battle of Halidon Hill was the surrender of Berwick 'Tower and town' to the invaders. Berwick remained thenceforward an integral part of the English dominion, the only territorial trophy of Edward's Scottish victories which was never lost. It was therefore invested with a peculiar interest and importance as representing the English claims to the

sovereignty of Scotland. It had its own officers of state, like a separate kingdom; and its exceptional position is commemorated in the heading of Acts of Parliament, declaring them to be of force in 'England and in the town of Berwick-on-Tweed.'

Edward wrote to the archbishops and bishops directing that thanks should be offered up to God for this great victory, and having received the homage of the Scotch nobles, and placed Balliol at the head of a force sufficient to confirm and extend his conquests, returned to England. Balliol was at once acknowledged by the Scotch Parliament assembled at Edinburgh, and many of the nobles swore fealty to his crown, though they hated him in their hearts as the creature and delegate of the hereditary enemy of their country, and as the instrument, if not the author of her degradation. For now the fairest provinces and the strongest fortresses of Scotland—Dunbar, Roxburgh, Edinburgh, and the whole kingdom south of the Forth—were ceded to Edward and declared to be for ever annexed to the English monarchy, while Balliol had to do liege homage to the English crown for that portion of Scotland over which he was allowed to remain the titular king. A.D. 1334.

The exasperation of the proud and patriotic inhabitants of Scotland may be imagined at this consummation of the national disgrace. It is true that at the close of the preceding century Scotland had become by right of conquest a dependency of the English crown; but since that time, the victory of Bannockburn, the good and wise reign of Robert Bruce, and, above all, the recent formal acknowledgment of the independence of Scotland by the treaty of 1328, had obliterated the conquest of 1296. The struggle which ended at Halidon Hill had been for dominion on the one side and independence on the other, and the worse had triumphed over the better cause.

Unable to bring an army into the field, the adherents of the national cause harassed the new Government by incessant petty insurrections. Sir Andrew Murray of Bothwell, a man of courage and capacity, now Regent in the name of the exiled King, got the better of Balliol's forces in many small but important actions. The French assisted the struggling party with men and money, and with ships, which hovered round the coast and cut off the supplies sent from England; till at last Balliol, twice a king and twice a fugitive in less than two years, was glad to find refuge within the English border, and the adherents of the Bruce once more seized upon the reins of government. Again and again did Edward journey in person to the north at the head of an army, in the vain hope of shoring up the tottering edifice of anti-national royalty. Truce upon truce was made, and no sooner made than broken by fresh uprisings of an irrepressible spirit of independence. The country was wasted by the invader far and near, and no open resistance attempted; but day after day found Edward farther than ever from the conquest of the Scottish soil, and more and more an object of detestation to the Scottish people; till a crisis occurred in another quarter which demanded all the warlike resources of England and recalled her King, chafed, sullen, and reluctant, to his own dominions.

Character of the war with Scotland.

A.D. 1335.

The war in Scotland had assumed a chronic character, and still lingered on, stimulated and embittered by the indirect influences of a mightier struggle; but its course was not marked by events of grave importance, and King Edward III. was not able again to invade Scotland in person for twenty years to come. For now the two foremost and most powerful nations of Europe were about to engage in a contest,

War with France. Beginning of the quarrel.

in which the best blood of both was to be spilt, furious passions evoked, and the seeds sown of imperishable animosities, for the sake of a selfish object impossible of attainment, and equally fatal to the interests of both peoples had it been attained.

Hostilities between England and France had been imminent towards the close of the last reign. The French army had indeed withdrawn from the actual occupation of the English territory of Aquitaine; but an agreement respecting the restoration of the Agenois not having been fulfilled, war was about to be declared between the two nations, when the deposition of Edward II. changed the policy of England. It will be remembered that one of the earliest acts of Edward III.'s Council of Regency was to send an embassy to Charles IV. of France, to negociate a treaty of peace, a principal condition of which was the restoration to England 'of certain lands recently seized in Aquitaine;' but, on the death of King Charles in the February of 1328, Edward laid claim to the sovereignty of the whole realm of France, and thus gave the first challenge to an international duel, which lasted, with intervals of breathing time, for a hundred years.

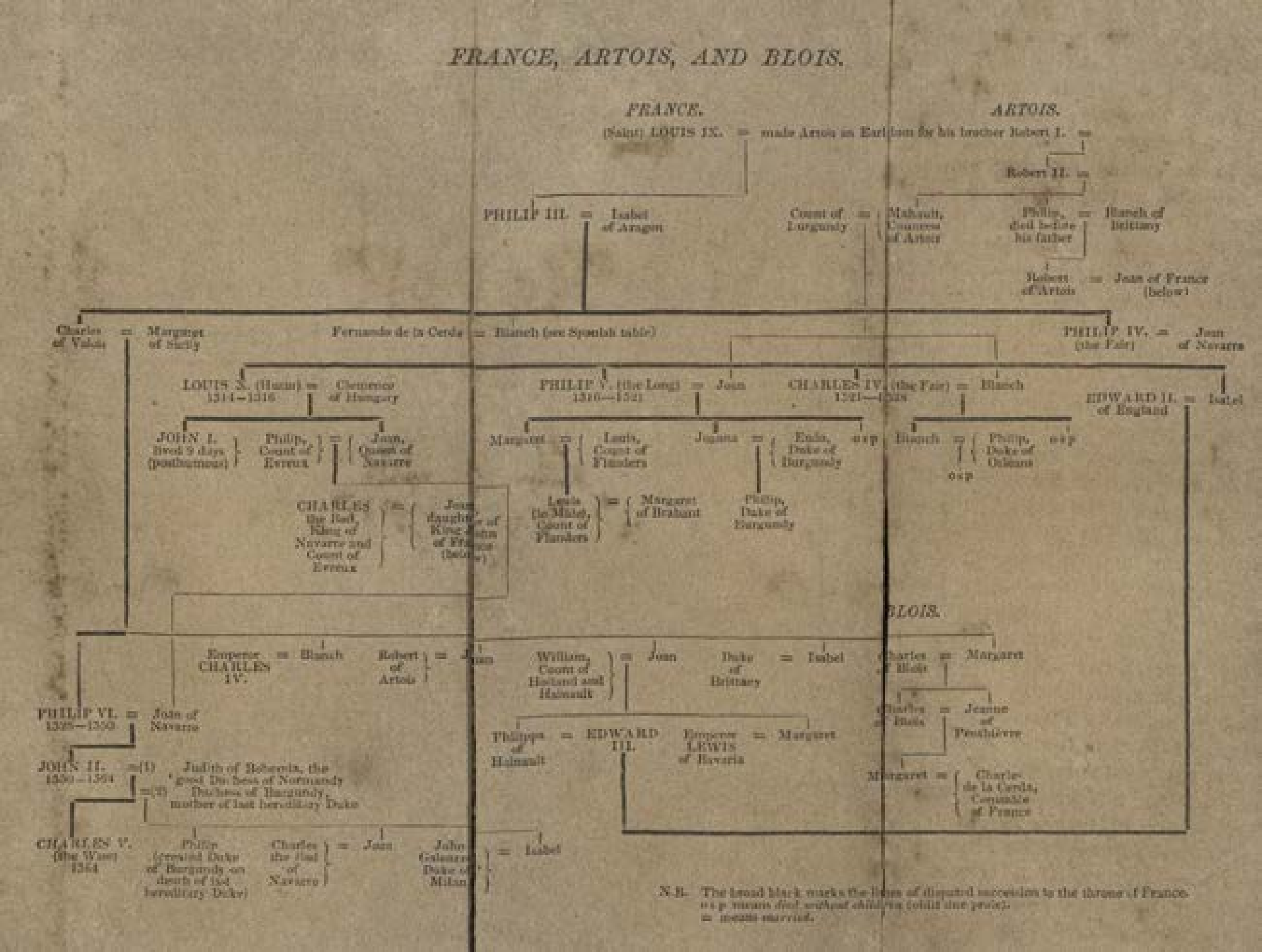
Among the many evils which Queen Isabel, of unhappy memory, brought upon the English people, the most fatal and far-reaching in their consequences were those which owed their origin not to her fault, but to her misfortune in standing in the line of succession to the throne of France. King Philip IV. (the Fair), dying in 1314, left three sons who became successively kings of France—Louis X., called Hutin or the Quarrelsome; Philip V., called the Long; and Charles IV., surnamed, like his father, the Fair. Louis died after a reign of two years only, having had no child but a daughter, Joan, afterwards, in her own right, Queen of Navarre. His wife, however, was, at the time of his death, expect-

Claims of Edward III.

ing her confinement, and shortly afterwards gave birth to a boy, who was called John I. in his cradle, but survived for nine days only. Then Philip the Long, who had already been appointed guardian of the realm, ascended the throne, but he again dying without a male heir, was succeeded by the third and last brother, Charles, who also died, leaving daughters only, in the year after Edward III.'s accession. Upon this occurrence, Queen Isabel of England, the mother of Edward III., was the sole survivor of that generation, the children of Philip the Fair. Now, had the law of succession been the same in France as it has been for many centuries with us, Joan, the daughter of Louis Hutin, would have reigned before her uncles Philip and Charles, and of course in priority of right to her aunt, Isabel Queen of England. In France, however, the succession was, and had been from time immemorial, regulated by the *Salic* law, which excluded females from the throne. In the case of Louis Hutin's daughter, the states of the realm, by a solemn decree, had affirmed the principle of the Salic law by excluding her, and declaring that all females were for ever incapable of succeeding to the crown of France.

A.D. 1328. This disqualification on the part of Joan, now Queen of Navarre, and on the part of his own mother, Edward did not deny. He admitted the view that 'the kingdom of France was too great for a woman to hold by reason of the imbecility of her sex;' but his contention was that though a female could not herself succeed, she could *transmit* the right of succession to her male offspring; and he therefore maintained that he, as the eldest son of Isabel, was, in default of direct male issue, the rightful heir to the French crown. Four years indeed after this date, the Queen of Navarre, Louis Hutin's daughter, gave birth to a son, who subsequently bore the well-deserved title of Charles the Bad, and

FRANCE, ARTOIS, AND BLOIS.


FRANCE.
ARTOIS.
(Saint) LOUIS IX. = made Artois an Earldom for his brother Robert I. =
Robert II. =
PHILIP III. = Isabel of Aragon
Count of Burgundy = Mahault, Countess of Artois
Philip, died before his father = Blanch of Brittany
Robert of Artois = Joan of France (below)
Charles of Valois = Margaret of Sicily
Fernando de la Cerda = Blanch (see Spanish table)
PHILIP IV. (the Fair) = Joan of Navarre
LOUIS X. (Hutin) 1314—1316 = Clemence of Hungary
PHILIP V. (the Long) 1316—1321 = Joan
CHARLES IV. (the Fair) 1321—1328 = Blanch
EDWARD II. of England = Isabel
JOHN I. lived 5 days (posthumous)
Philip, Count of Evreux = Joan, Queen of Navarre
Margaret = Louis, Count of Flanders
Joanna = Eudo, Duke of Burgundy
o.s.p.
Blanch = Philip, Duke of Orleans
o.s.p.
CHARLES the Bad, King of Navarre and Count of Evreux = Joan, daughter of King John of France (below)
Louis de Male, Count of Flanders = Margaret of Brabant
Philip, Duke of Burgundy
BLOIS.
Emperor CHARLES IV. = Blanch
Robert of Artois = Joan
William, Count of Holland and Hainault = Joan
Duke of Brittany = Isabel
Charles of Blois = Margaret
PHILIP VI. 1328—1350 = Joan of Navarre
Philippa of Hainault = EDWARD III.
Emperor LEWIS of Bavaria = Margaret
Charles of Blois = Jeanne of Penthièvre
JOHN II. 1350—1364 =(1) =(2) Judith of Bohemia, the good Duchess of Normandy Duchess of Burgundy, mother of last hereditary Duke
Margaret = Charles de la Cerda, Constable of France
CHARLES V. (the Wise) 1364
Philip (created Duke of Burgundy on death of last hereditary Duke)
Charles the Bad of Navarre = Joan
John Galeazzo Duke of Milan = Isabel

N.B. The broad black marks the lines of disputed succession to the throne of France.
o.s.p. means *died without children* (child alive *post*).
= means *married*.

whose claim was undoubtedly superior to Edward's, even from his own point of view. But now, in 1328, on the death of the last undisputed King of France, and the birth of a posthumous daughter of that monarch, Edward was in a position to urge, as he did not long afterwards in a forcible letter to the Pope, that he was *the nearest male in blood to the deceased sovereign*, to whom he was related in the second degree; whereas Philip of Valois, the only other claimant in the field, stood in the third degree of consanguinity. Meanwhile the 'twelve barons of France' acting as the highest authority of the kingdom during an interregnum, had decided and declared that the crown devolved upon Philip of Valois, as the first cousin of the late King.

Thus the royal dignity passed out of the direct line of the descendants of Hugh Capet, who had transmitted it from father to son for three hundred and forty years.

Edward's view of the case was supported by his own Parliament and by many disinterested authorities at the time, and even received the sanction of some French jurists; but there can be little or no doubt that his claim was altogether untenable, being opposed to traditional usage, recent decisions, and, finally, to the wishes of the French people. It would seem, from subsequent events, that he had no present intention of doing more than placing it upon record, but we may observe here the first example of that halting, uncertain, double-handed policy which throughout his reign characterised the whole of his transactions with the French kings. While maintaining an outward attitude of amity towards France, he took measures for fortifying the Channel Islands, negociated with the Duke of Brabant for the hire of mercenary troops, and wrote to his seneschals in Aquitaine telling them that it was his full intention to recover 'the heritage of his mother' by all means in his power, and engaging them

secretly to enlist certain Gascon nobles on his side by promising them indemnity for any risks which they might run.

Position of Philip of Valois.

Philip, in all probability, had no suspicion of the existence of a counter-claim to his throne, and thought of the young King of England only as a liegeman owing homage to himself as feudal suzerain of the English fiefs in France. At the time of his accession, however, he was not in a position to stir up any dangerous questions, for he found himself involved in a war with the Flemings, whose sovereign, Count Louis, having been expelled by his subjects, had sought the French king's protection and assistance in recovering his rights. Now Philip hated the Flemings, because he was at heart a selfish and narrow-minded aristocrat, and could not bear that a trading community, relying on their prosperity, wealth, and intelligence, should dare to show a will of their own, or entertain ideas of political liberty. He therefore espoused the cause of the exiled prince, and gladly availing himself of the first opportunity of calling all his vassals together under his authority, he marched against the Flemings, determined to teach them, and through them, his own dependents, that merchants and tradesmen were no match for knights and nobles in the field. The sturdy plebeians, notwithstanding, were very near giving to the chivalry of France a lesson quite different from what they expected, but, after a gallant, stand-up, and long doubtful fight near the town of Cassel, they were defeated with terrible slaughter, and compelled to receive back their banished sovereign. Having achieved this triumph, Philip, on his return to his dominions, sent by Roger, Abbot of Fécamp (afterwards Pope Clement VI.), a message to King Edward, commanding him to repair to France and do him homage for the fief of Guienne.

A.D. 1328.

Battle of Cassel.

This summons was subsequently repeated, and then, before returning an answer, Edward, according to his wont, submitted the question to a Parliament assembled at Westminster in February 1329, at which it was decided, probably under the influence of Mortimer, whose interest it then was to preserve the peace, that the King should obey the citation. It would seem, however, that a secret protest was placed on record that his claim to the crown of France was not in any way compromised by his consenting to do homage for his duchy. The Cathedral at Amiens was the place fixed upon for this high ceremonial. The King of France received his vassal seated on his throne, in a blue velvet robe of state, sprinkled with golden fleurs-de-lys, his crown on his head and his sceptre in his hand, and surrounded by a brilliant assemblage of reigning kings and sovereign princes his feudatories, and all the great nobles of his realm. It was an occasion for pomp and splendour, and Edward—nothing loth, for he loved display, and had come over with a gorgeous retinue and a thousand richly caparisoned horses—now entered, and stood before King Philip to do his homage in a robe and train of crimson velvet, with the English leopards embroidered on them in gold, his crown on his head and golden spurs upon his heels. Then, inclining his body towards the throne, he said in a loud voice, 'Philip, King of France, I, Edward, by the Grace of God King of England, Lord of Ireland, and Duke of Aquitaine, do hereby become thy man, to hold the Duchy of Guienne as Duke thereof, and the Earldom of Ponthieu and Montreuil as Earl thereof, and as Peer of France, in like manner as my predecessors did homage for the said Duchy and Earldom to thy predecessors.' But King Philip, when he called together his subjects and subject princes to witness the ceremony, had looked for a more

A.D. 1329. Edward does homage.

submissive form of 'commendation,' as it was called, than this, and told his chancellor to 'let his liegeman know that the manner of his predecessors was to put off the crown and lay aside the sword, and do homage with their hands between the French King's hands, then and there promising fealty and homage to the King of France as their sovereign lord.' This Edward refused to yield, but in the meantime, until the records of precedent could be consulted, he agreed to a compromise; and when the oath was tendered to him he answered 'Voire' (so be it), placing his hands between those of the French king, while the latter in accordance with the prescribed form of the feudal system, kissed him on the mouth.

Edward returned home highly delighted with all that he had seen in France, and so full of friendly feelings towards its sovereign that he proposed a double alliance between the royal houses, by which his brother should be united to one of Philip's daughters, and his sister Eleanor should become the wife of the heir of France. Thus it was that, though the fortresses in Agenois claimed under the treaty of 1327 were not mutually restored, nor homage duly done according to the requirements of the French King, amicable personal relations continued for a time to subsist between the two Courts.

But in Aquitaine a hostile spirit was at work. The English had garrisoned Saintes, a frontier town, and the Count of Alençon, who had been sent to watch over French interests in this quarter, exceeding his instructions, attacked and took it. This act of aggression had all but kindled the war. In the Parliament held at Eltham in 1330 the King asked for a subsidy in case the French King should reject all terms of peace, and soon after directed ships to be got in readiness to convey troops to Aquitaine; but, strange as it may seem, he was all the time employing commissioners to bring about an

accommodation, and through their exertions a treaty was actually concluded at Bois de Vincennes (May 1330).

But now the question of the incomplete homage was revived, and Edward was once more summoned before his suzerain. It should be borne in mind that by the rules of the feudal system the forfeiture of the fief to its liege lord was the immediate consequence of a refusal to do the duty of a vassal; and in a letter to the Pope, written by Mortimer's desire, at this date, Edward states that he believes King Philip is preparing to enter into possession of the duchy by force, and implores the Holy Father's intercession. At the same time he writes to his seneschals in Guienne to say that if the King of France attempts to 'make execution' in that territory without employing force, they are to 'dissimulate' and gain time, but that 'force must be met by force.'

Friendly relations between English and French Kings.

On the death of Mortimer in 1330, Edward, wishing to re-establish friendly personal relations with the French King, executed a deed admitting that he had done him full and liege homage; and shortly afterwards went, attended by his friend Lord Montacute, who had shared with him the dangers of Mortimer's apprehension, 'with scarce fifteen horsemen,' disguised as merchants, to pay a visit to Philip. This interview seems to have led to an understanding, for the French King agreed to restore the castle of Saintes, paying 40,000 livres for the damage done to it—and also admitted that he was satisfied on the subject of the homage. Peace was therefore again proclaimed between England and France in 1331, and maintained for five years unbroken by overt hostilities. In the spring of the year following this treaty, it was proposed by King Philip that he and Edward should make a joint crusade against the Saracens in the Holy Land or against the Moors of Granada. Edward's acceptance of the

proposal is hardly to be wondered at, for he was at an age when the love of adventure, even when untinctured with religious fanaticism, is sufficient to overcome prudential considerations. It does seem strange, however, that the Lords and Commons of Parliament, untaught by the long historical series of past failures, should have acquiesced in and even encouraged such a costly, hazardous, and chimerical undertaking. They only suggested that its execution should be postponed for a time, before the lapse of which, as it came to pass, the outbreak of war with Scotland (p. 29), and dangers nearer home engrossed the attention and energies of the English people. That war embittered the relations between England and France, for the latter was continually assisting Scotland, either openly with ships and troops, or by secret subsidy and encouragement.

The Popes, during the reigns of Edwards II. and III. were living under the protection of the Kings of France, first at Lyons and afterwards at Avignon, in an exile from Rome which, from its duration of nearly seventy years, was called the '*Babylonish Captivity*.' And, indeed, they came there in the first instance at the bidding of the French King, and distributed the sanctions and denunciations of the Church for the most part in the interests of himself and his successors. In the summer of 1335, however, when Philip wrote to Benedict XII. at Avignon, saying that he was obliged by his treaties with the Scots to give them assistance, the Pope strongly warned him against the danger of embroiling England and France in war, and offered himself to act as mediator between the two kingdoms. But though no sovereign in those times willingly disregarded the Pope's suggestions, they were rarely permitted to stand in the way of personal interests or schemes of national aggrandisement. Now Philip, throughout these transactions,

Philip's policy.

enjoyed one great advantage over his rival—that of having a positive and definite policy, while Edward had none. This policy, which he had inherited from his predecessors on the French throne, consisted in the endeavour to extinguish altogether the great fiefs of the Crown by reducing them to absolute submission—to absorb them into the monarchy, and thus at last to weld all the provinces of France into one compact and solid dominion. Such was Philip's wise and statesmanlike aim, and to prevent his gaining it at England's expense was probably at this time the only object of King Edward, whose claim upon the throne of France had long been suffered to lie in abeyance. That claim was only revived when it became evident that hostilities *à outrance* were inevitable, and that a war on a defensive basis would fail to arouse the enthusiasm and satisfy the proud and adventurous spirit of the English people. Philip, meanwhile, was acting with extreme duplicity. He not only endeavoured, by all means in his power, to undermine the loyalty of Edward's subjects in Aquitaine, where there had always been a French party and an English party—the former strongest in the country districts, the latter in the towns—but he secretly laid plans for an invasion of England, in order to call off Edward's attention from the defence of his French possessions. In Sicily, Genoa, Norway, and Holland ships were being fitted out for this object, but the authorities of those countries were induced by the representations of the English Government to put a stop to these preparations. Not content, however, with secondary measures of defence, Edward created a Board to advise on the best means of protecting the English coast, and wrote to the Mayor of Bayonne directing him to send a fleet to England to assist in repelling an expected invasion from the Norman shore. He also commanded his two admirals to take the sea, in whose commission

occur words which, illustrated as they have been by the subsequent history of five centuries, no Englishman of the present day can read without some feeling of pride in his country's long traditions of glory: 'Whereas our progenitors, the Kings of England, have been in all times past lords of the English sea on every side.' (Cf. p. 227.)

These precautions were not taken too soon, for in September 1336 an attack was actually made upon the Isle of Wight and the other Channel islands, and English commerce interrupted by French cruisers. Repeated aggressions had compelled Edward to abandon his expected conquest of Scotland, and it became every day more clear that Philip was scheming to wrest from him his French possessions. Notwithstanding all this, however, probably because his intentions were honestly pacific, possibly because he only wished to gain time for more complete preparation, the English King spared no exertions to come to an agreement with France. When, however, all his overtures were rejected, and it became evident that he was being goaded into war, he saw that it behoved him not only to muster his fleets and arm his battalions, but also to look around and strengthen himself by alliances, so as to be ready to take the field at once, unless prepared to submit unresistingly to the dictation of France. His principal object, and one in the prosecution of which he showed considerable adroitness, was to take advantage of the dissensions and jealousies of the neighbours by whom Philip was surrounded.

Aggressions of the French.

But in order to understand the nature and extent of Edward's alliances, and the powers arrayed against him, it will be desirable to take a short survey of the map of Europe at this date.

FIRST DECADE.—**A.D. 1327–1337.**

CHAPTER III.

THE STATES OF EUROPE, ETC., IN THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY.

ENGLAND and France were, in the fourteenth century, the two most formidable nations in Europe. Others might be named which surpassed them both, in wealth or in population or in extent of territory; but there were none which combined in an equal degree the several elements of power, or possessed within their own boundaries such a warlike stock of fighting men. They were, however, very differently circumstanced from the England and France of to-day. For in the mediæval struggles between those two nations, Scotland, as has been already abundantly shown, instead of suppyling to the national army, as she now does, the very flower of its soldiery, was, owing to her hostility to England and sympathy to France, her geographical situation, and her capabilities for carrying on a harassing warfare,—a constant source of weakness and distraction, and one of the most effective and dangerous allies of the French King. England, Scotland,

Ireland indeed furnished occasionally a small contingent of irregular troops to the English armies; but far from being an element of national strength, this unfortunate dependency had become thus early in the history of its connexion with England one of the greatest difficulties of the sister island. Bounded on and Ireland.

its farther shore by a melancholy and unfrequented ocean, and believed to be the farthest outpost of humanity towards the unknown west,—torn by apparently purposeless intestine dissensions, whilst in a state of chronic revolt against the influences of English civilisation;—Ireland was an object of constant wonder, perplexity, and apprehensions to the kings and statesmen of the greater island, to which she was then, as now, by situation and circumstances, irrevocably bound.

France.

France, in respect of its boundaries and national constituents, was still very much in the same condition as it had been left by Hugh Capet some 350 years before, except that its subdivisions were fewer and each of its 'fiefs' larger and more important. These were now in reality small dominions in themselves, the ancient chiefs of which, their counts or dukes, had become their true sovereigns, while the King of France was little more than their feudal overlord and suzerain. Such were the Counts of Flanders, Champagne, and Toulouse; the Duke of Brittany, the Duke of Burgundy (to whom Nivernois owed homage), the Duke of Aquitaine, then also King of England.

Spain. Navarre.

South of the Pyrenees, the kingdom of Navarre, though no longer, as it had been in the days of Charles the Great and his sons, a portion of 'Western Francia,' or France, was governed by a French princess, the daughter of Louis X. Three other Christian kingdoms had been formed in the northern province of Spain out of territories wrested from the Almohades, a tribe of Moors who had come over from Africa in the twelfth century, on a 'kind of Mahometan crusade,' and had subdued nearly the whole of the Spanish peninsula. These were the kingdom of Aragon, founded by 'James the Conqueror' in the latter half of the previous century, and that of Portugal, at about the

Aragon. Portugal.

same time; and lastly the great kingdom of Castile, which included the central and north-western part of the peninsula, and had reached its then dimensions by the annexation of the kingdom of Leon, and the acquisition of the great cities of Seville and Cordova under Saint Ferdinand III. A great part of the south of Spain, the 'kingdom of Granada,' was still in the hands of the Moors, who, receiving frequent accessions of strength from beyond the Straits of Gibraltar, and protected by a good barrier of mountains on their northern border, had hitherto been able to maintain themselves within their contracted limits, against the crusading attacks of Christian Powers.

Granada.

On the southern shore of the Mediterranean, beginning with the Moorish kingdom of Fez, the whole of the African seaboard was occupied by tribes professing the faith of Islam. In fact, the Mediterranean itself more than once seemed in a fair way to become 'a Mahometan lake.' For, at one time, the religion of the Koran prevailed from the Pyrenees, all round by the coasts of Spain, of Africa, of Syria and Asia Minor, to the head of the Archipelago,—almost encircling the little Christian isle of Cyprus,—at another the Crescent gleamed from the Straits of Gibraltar to the head of the Adriatic, receding on the western seaboard of Europe as it advanced on its eastern shore.

Africa.

Between Spain and Italy, on the northern shore of the Mediterranean, and bounded by the Rhone on the west, lay Provence, a dependency of the French King of Naples; for the southern portion of the Italian peninsula, 'the kingdom of Sicily on the mainland,' was still ruled over by the dynasty of Anjou, who had won it a century before. This kingdom of Sicily, with Naples for its capital, though, like the little kingdoms of Corsica and Sardinia,

Provence.

Sicily.

a fief of the Popedom, was, in extent of territory, the most important dominion in Italy, and one of its kings, Robert, who reigned from 1309 to 1343, was a prominent figure in the history of the Papal and Imperial struggles of his time, and a devoted partisan of the *Guelfs*, as the friends of the Pope were termed, in opposition to the *Ghibellines*, the party of the Emperor. Its political and moral weight, however, was inferior to that of many of the little principalities and commonwealths in the north of the peninsula, where the separate life of cities had enjoyed a free development in the absence of restrictions on enterprise, the security of the acquisitions of industry, and the education of self-government.

Papal States.

The patrimony of the Church comprised the finest provinces of central Italy; but during the absence of the Popes at Avignon, the greater part of central Italy was a prey to factions and misgovernment, and Rome had ceased to be the Christian metropolis of the world. The Papal coffers, however, were replenished by the regular and occasional offerings of the faithful, and by the fees paid into the detested but indispensable 'Curia Romana,' as the Papal Court was called,—for in every Christian State of Europe an appeal lay to that Court in all cases involving the Canon law. John XXII., who died in 1334, left behind him no less a sum than 25,000,000 gold florins, a sum probably equivalent to £50,000,000 of the money of our time. The reigning Pope, Benedict XII., had, out of his predecessor's accumulations, built himself a palace-fortress, at Avignon in Provence, and the luxurious villas, parks, and gardens of his cardinals spread themselves along the French bank of the river. The Popes no longer occupied the commanding position which they had held during the great pontificates of a few years back; but, though notoriously under French influence, they kept up

their traditionary character of international mediators, and, as no sovereign could afford to dispense with their sanction to his undertakings, they still exercised a widely influential power in the councils of Europe.

In the northern portion of Italy, and within the semicircle of the Alps, the Governments of Lombardy and Tuscany had reached, in Edward the Third's reign, a very high pitch of prosperity and power. As Saracenic civilisation decayed on the western shores of the Mediterranean, and Byzantine civilisation decayed at their opposite extremity, the Italian republics in some sort took the place of both, and the Crusades, which weakened and impoverished the rest of Europe, had brought a large accession of wealth, culture, and dominion to the rising commonwealths on the Adriatic and Etruscan Seas. They lay, in fact, under the suspicion of lukewarmness in the contests which thrilled all other Christian hearts, and even of an interested sympathy with the resistance of the infidels. Their geographical position was such that the civilised West and the barbarous East sought and found in their shops and warehouses a mart of exchange for their commodities, the choicest woven fabrics in their factories, a secure depository for treasure in their banks, and inexhaustible facilities of transport in their ships. The annual revenues of Florence alone amounted to £300,000, a far larger sum than England and Ireland yielded to Edward III., or even to the Tudor sovereigns two centuries later. Italian Republics.

In the south-east of Europe the Ottoman Turks had overrun the Christian provinces of the Eastern Roman Empire, and were spreading to the north and east, overrunning the Sclavonic countries of Servia and Bulgaria, and making piratical incursions on the Mediterranean coasts. About the middle of Edward the Third's reign they had got a firm footing in Europe, The Turks.

and towards the end of it Amurath the Great had established his capital at Adrianople; and Constantinople, with a small district round it, and some outlying territories in the Peloponnesus and elsewhere, was all that remained of the wide dominion of the Latin Emperors of the East.

In the north, beyond the limits of Ottoman conquest, lay the three great Christian kingdoms of the Magyars (or Hungarians), the Poles, and the Russians; but the Russians were separated from the two former by the vast territory stretching from the Baltic to the Black Sea of the Lithuanians, who were still heathens, and the last *Aryan* people in Europe to embrace Christianity. The northern portion of Russia was occupied by the great republic of Novgorod, extending across the Ural Mountains into Asia; but Russia proper had lain for upwards of 100 years in a state of absolute, though indignant, vassalage to the Khan of Tartary. In the year of Edward the Third's accession, the first step towards the emancipation of Russia was made by the establishment of the national capital at Moscow; but a century and a half more had passed before the famous Ivan Vasilovitz finally shook off Mogul (that is, Tartar) supremacy. During almost the whole of Edward's reign continual struggles went on between the Lithuanians, Russians, and Poles, but before the end of it a really powerful kingdom was established by the union of the crowns of Poland and Hungary under Louis the Great.

Hungary. Poland. Russia.

Along the middle shore of the Baltic on the south lay the territories of the 'Teutonic Knights' and the 'Knights of the Sword.' These two half military, half religious orders had established themselves in Prussia, Pomerania, and Livonia, and waged incessant wars with their heathen subjects and neighbours. These

Teutonic Knights.

POPES.

CLEMENT V. 1305

Removed from Rome to Lyons, and thence to Avignon.

JOHN XXII. 1316

Against whom the Emperor Lewis set up Antipope Nicholas V. 1327.

BENEDICT XII. 1333

CLEMENT VI. 1342

INNOCENT VI. 1352

URBAN V. 1362

GREGORY XI. 1370

Removed the Papal seat back to Rome, and survived Edward III.

EMPIRE.

First Emperor after the Great Interregnum.

HENRY VII., Count of Luxemburg, elected 1308, crowned Emperor 1312 = Margaret of Brabant

Elizabeth of Bohemia = John of Luxemburg, King of Bohemia

(Double election)

LEWIS V., Duke of Bavaria, elected 1314, crowned Emperor 1328 = Margaret of Hainault

and Frederick, Duke of Austria, elected 1314, but never crowned Emperor

John II., King of France = Judith, grand Duchess of Normandy

CHARLES IV., King of Bohemia elected 1347, crowned Emperor 1334,* died 1378 = Blanch of France, sister of Philip VI.

Charles V., King of France

* No Emperor after him till 1273

SCOTLAND.

DAVID I., d. Dec. 1124 = Maud of Northumberland

Henry, Prince of Scotland = Elizabeth of Vermandois

WILLIAM THE LION = Ermengarde of Beaumont

ALEXANDER II. = Mary de Coucy

ALEXANDER III. = Isabel de Dreux

Margaret = Eric, Prince of Norway

MAID OF NORWAY
Queen of Scotland, 1286 to 1290
upon which a competition arose between two of the descendants, through females, of DAVID I., viz.:

Robert Bruce of Annandale and JOHN BALLIOL, King of Scotland 1292

Robert Bruce of Annandale

Edward, King of Ireland

ROBERT BRUCE, King of Scotland 1306 = Mary de Burgh

EDWARD BALLIOL, King of Scotland 1332 d.s.p.

DAVID BRUCE, King of Scotland 1329 = Joan, daughter of Edward II. d.s.p.

Margery = Walter the Steward

ROBERT the Steward, King of Scotland 1370 to 1390

Martha of Ross = John the Steward

N.B. = means married.
d.s.p. means died without children (their own proles).

neighbours no doubt were superstitious and bloodthirsty. They immolated human victims, and burnt slaves on the graves of their departed heroes; but the real attractiveness of the crusades against them lay not in the wish to extirpate infidelity and barbarism, but in the fact that war was then universally regarded as a noble field-sport, and this was, as it were, the most accessible hunting-ground. Religious fanaticism lent an additional inducement by holding out the same hopes of expiation to the European crusader as to the warrior pilgrim to the distant holy places in the East, by washing out his sins in the blood of unbelievers.

Denmark, Norway, and Sweden were at this time powerful and aggressive States, and were making conquests on the Baltic seaboard, but they do not figure largely on the stage of the history of Edward III. Denmark. Norway. Sweden.

It is impossible to omit all mention of the very remarkable discovery of documentary and architectural evidence of the former existence of an European and Christian colony from Norway, with churches, monasteries, and a succession of bishops for two and a half centuries, on the Main of Greenland: a colony which is especially notable in this place because it vanished altogether from the face of the earth at the end of the fourteenth century; and when Hans Egede, the famous Norwegian missionary, disembarked in Greenland in 1721, he had no idea that he was about to visit the ruined or deserted haunts of predecessors of his own country, faith, and tongue. There is also good reason to believe that the Northmen, under the adventurous Leif, had already made their way beyond Greenland, and been the first discoverers of America, trading with the natives for furs 450 years before Columbus first went to Iceland to collect Greenland. America.

information to guide him in his Transatlantic researches.

The whole of the centre of Europe was occupied by 'the Empire,' a territorial expression of vast import. The Empire. The Emperor was, in theory, the successor of Charles the Great (or Charlemagne, if the imperial Teuton must always be known in England by a Frenchified form of his name), whose dominion extended over the whole of the European continent south and west of the Elbe and Danube, with the exception of a fragment of Italy and the greater part of Spain. This 'Empire of the Franks' was divided among the grandsons of Charles, and 'Western Francia' passed away for ever from the Empire, and became the kingdom of France. Lothar, the eldest, succeeded to the title of Emperor, and, as it was necessary that the Imperial dominions should include the two capitals Rome and Aachen (or Aix-la-Chapelle), he had a strip of territory assigned to him running north and south between the eastern frontier of France and the Rhine, from the Zuyder Zee to the Mediterranean, including the country within the semicircle of the Alps and the northern half of Italy, and called after him Lothringen (Lorraine). The remainder of the Empire of Charles the Great—those peoples who spoke the German and not the Romance tongue, east and north of the Rhine and the Alps—fell to the share of his third grandson—'Eastern Franks,' Saxons, Bavarians, Austrians, Carinthians, with a doubtful dominion over Czechs and Moravians beyond the Danube. After many vicissitudes the Empire was nearly reunited (with the exception of France) by Henry (the Fowler) of Germany, in the early part of the tenth century. He conquered and annexed Lothringen, which he divided into Upper Lothringen, or 'the Moselle,' and Lower Lothringen, or Brabant, and raised his kingdom—for the title of Emperor was in abey-

ance—to the first rank among European monarchies. The Imperial dignity was revived in favour of his son Otho, who was crowned in 962, and the Empire as he left it, though the title of its rulers had often varied in the interval, was, with respect to its extent and constituents, the 'Germany' of the time of Edward III. It must be borne in mind, however, that Germany, like France, was an aggregate of almost independent principalities under a titular head; and that their bond of union was even slenderer than the tie which bound together the constituents of the French kingdom. For the succession to the Imperial crown was not hereditary like that of France, but elective, and the intrigues of the candidates and of their respective partisans were constantly stirring up the elements of disunion. On the sudden death of the Emperor Henry VII. in 1313, Lewis of Bavaria and Frederick of Austria were both elected, Lewis by four of the seven electors, Frederick by three; but the votes were disputed, and for eight years from the accession of Lewis in 1314 Germany saw her fertile fields wasted and her cities laid in ruins by the struggle between the Austrian and Bavarian parties, till at last in the battle of *Muhldorf*, in 1322, the Austrians were finally defeated, and Frederick carried off a prisoner.

Among the northern fiefs of the Empire were the dukedom of Brabant, one portion of Flanders and the great cities of the Hanseatic League; while on the South, the powerful commonwealths of Lombardy, and the Dukes of Savoy who ruled around the Lake of Geneva, all owed a nominal allegiance to the Imperial crown. One more constituent of the Empire claims a passing notice. South of Germany, between Italy and France, there had sprung up, almost unnoticed by the greater kingdoms, a new European Power, the Swiss Confederation, about fifty years before this time. Swiss Confederation.

The mountaineers of the three ancient cantons Uri, Underwalden, and Schwyz had been driven to unite in an offensive and defensive league in 1291, to protect their freedom against the Austrians, over whom they won a famous battle at *Morgarten* in 1315. This was a victory of great importance, as confirming the possession of the central mountains of Europe to a hardy, warlike, and independent race. Several neighbouring cities joined their alliance, and by the latter end of the fourteenth century they had formed a confederation of eight States, and came to be called Swiss, from the name of the famous canton of Schwyz, which formed the nucleus of the league. In 1386 they won another great victory over the Austrians at *Sempach*, which confirmed the independence of their republic; but they never reached the same point of political importance or social culture as the neighbouring Italian commonwealths, though far surpassing them in nobility of character and warlike virtues; for the love of liberty was to these rugged mountaineers what the pursuit of wealth, literature, art, and luxury was to the more favoured communities on the southern side of the Alps.

The Flemings.

But of all the secondary Powers of Europe none played so important a part in the history of these times as the Flemings, part of whose territory was held under the French King and part under the Emperor. The Flemings having been the first people in northern Europe to cultivate industrial arts and manufactures, a rich middle class had sprung up among them, plebeian in origin, but imbued with ideas of self-importance and political independence unknown elsewhere in persons of that condition under feudal institutions. Their sovereign, Count Louis of Flanders and Nevers, had been brought up in France, was thoroughly French in habits and in character; and feeling no sympathy

with the political aspirations for the new estate, cared little for the prosperity or reverses of his busy subjects, so long as their punctual payment of his revenues enabled him to lead an easy life amidst the pleasures of Paris. Some years after his expulsion and forcible reinstatement, of which mention has already been made, the Flemings, weary of continued misrule, chose for their *Ruwart*, or president, James van Arteveldt, 'the Brewer of Ghent,' so called because, though by birth an aristocrat, he had enrolled himself in the Guild of Brewers, and thrown in his lot with the traders, in their resistance to the selfish exactions of Count Louis. His authority was limited, for the sturdy burgomasters were not men to submit to despotism under the disguise of a commonwealth, but his administrative ability, his wealth, and his eloquence gained him practically unbounded influence over his countrymen; and, though the use which he made of it was not always judicious or unblamable, he claims to rank at least as the purest and most patriotic of demagogues.

Importance of the Flemish alliance.

The importance of securing the alliance of the Flemings had been strongly urged upon the English King by Robert of Artois, a French noble, who, having made a bitter enemy of King Philip, had thrown himself into the arms of Edward, and become his most trusted confidant and adviser. Acting upon Robert's suggestions, the King had written to the brother of his Queen Philippa, William, Count of Hainault—and now, by failure of the elder branch, Count of Holland also—and at the same time to his brother-in-law the Margrave of Juliers, authorising them to form alliances for him with their neighbours in Flanders and Brabant. Now the Flemings and the English had a common interest, which throughout the war kept them almost always on the same side, though they

had more than one 'lovers' quarrel' in the course of it. The Flemings were at this time the most successful workers in woollen fabrics of northern Europe, and their principal towns had risen from very small beginnings to their present importance chiefly by this manufacture. But the English wool, and especially that of the eastern counties, then enjoyed the same pre-eminence of excellence above all the wools of the known world, which the Sea-island cotton possessed (or possesses) over all other staples of that article, and commanded an enormous price for the factories of the Flemings. It was their interest to pay highly for prime wool, and it was England's interest to sell in the dearest market, irrespectively of all political or strategical considerations. But it was also highly important to the English King to secure the goodwill of a country which could give him a landing and an unmolested passage for his troops on their march to France. Now, the Count of Flanders was the liegeman of the French crown, but it was to him that Edward first made overtures, in the hope of detaching him from the interest of Philip; and he endeavoured on more than one occasion to bring about a marriage between the Count's heir and the princess Joan of England. Finally, however, Edward determined on allying himself with the popular party; and, in order to satisfy the scruples of the French Flemings, who, in spite of their democratic aspirations, were proud of their position as the 'first fief of the crown of France,' he constituted himself their lawful suzerian by publicly assuming the title of King of France, and challenging Philip as a usurper. These steps were taken under the influence of Van Arteveldt, who was determined, at all hazards, to prevent the probably intended absorption of the fief of Flanders in the French monarchy, and looked to the English alliance as the best security against this danger.

The Duke of Brabant was another powerful feudatory of the Empire whom Edward much wished to gain over to his side. His people were the most successful rivals of the Flemings in the manufacture of wool, and, like them, wished to secure the raw material of the best quality, from England. The Duke accordingly asked for the establishment in Brabant of a wool *staple*, or privileged wool market, to which alone that article could be consigned from England, and in which alone it could be legally purchased by the foreign manufacturer.

Wool staples established in Brabant.

The question of the establishment of staples will occur again. It is now sufficient to observe that Edward was probably not altogether ignorant of the injurious effects of such an institution upon trade, for he at first strongly objected to the proposal; but afterwards, yielding to the necessity of strengthening his position, he consented to the establishment of three staples—Brussels, Mechlin, and Louvain, in the dominions of the Duke of Brabant. It will shortly be seen, however, that he had to pay a still heavier price for the alliance of this shifty potentate.

The English King could rely on the co-operation of his three brothers-in-law the Counts of Hainault and of Guelders, and the Margrave of Juliers, who were already engaged in negociating alliances for him, and he now sent abroad his friend Lord Montacute, recently created Earl of Salisbury, and others, on a kind of roving commission, to treat with any foreign Powers for the export of wool. Among their suite were many young Knights Bachelors who had each bandaged up one eye, under a vow to their fair ladies at home that they would use one eye only till they had done some deed of chivalry in France. In the autumn of the same year Edward entered into an alliance with the Emperor to furnish him

with 2,000 men-at-arms, for whose services he was to pay 3,000 gold florins, to fight against 'Philip, calling himself King of France.'

Many of these steps had been taken before Edward's reluctant abandonment of his Scotch campaign, but directly after returning to England he set about his final preparations for war with characteristic arbitrariness and impetuosity. His first care was to complete his arrangements for the defence of his own dominions. He forbad any one to leave the country without his permission, or to disembark in England before he had been searched for treasonable correspondence from abroad. He appointed Lord Salisbury the first English 'Admiral of the Fleet,' and made him 'Captain of all the ports on the Thames and south coasts.' The navy of that day comprised a few ships belonging to the King himself, for we read in the royal accounts of his paying for new anchors for the 'Christopher' and the 'Cogge Edward,' and for eighty oaks to be sent to Kingston on Hull for building ships. The Cinque Ports were obliged to provide a certain number of cruisers, but the bulk of the ships of war were really merchant vessels impressed for the purpose, a definite contingent of which each seaport was called upon to supply. This system, applied to a commercial country like England, was productive of great inconvenience; and early in this reign, and more loudly towards its close, when the monarchy had grown weaker and the Parliament stronger,—the people remonstrated against that arbitrary imposition of ship levies and ship taxes, which three centuries later stirred up a rebellion and overthrew the monarchy.

Final preparations for the war. A.D. 1337.

The fleet.

To meet the enormous expenses of his intended expedition, the King had recourse to those 'tallages' and forced loans which afterwards became so frequent in the

course of this costly reign. From the first the war was popular. Edward was able to say with truth that the commons 'urged' him to push his claim to the French crown, and the nobles 'assented.' The country could afford to be generous, for it was growing rich, and Parliament had backed up its approval by granting him *permission to purchase* 20,000 sacks of wool, no less than half the annual produce of the kingdom,—a roundabout form of subsidy which seems to have recommended itself to the taxmakers and taxpayers of those days, in spite of its wasteful and mischievous effects, by looking a little less like arbitrary confiscation than a direct transfer of a tenth or fifteenth of the property of individuals to the royal exchequer. The 'sack' of wool contained 364 lbs., a measure long since abandoned in favour of the 'pack,' which, containing 240 lbs., adapts itself readily to calculations of the penny against the pound avoirdupois. This sack of English wool was worth 20*l.* in the markets of Brabant where the King intended to dispose of it, but the producer in England had to sell it for 3*l.* As the King enjoyed the right of *pre-emption*, and could prevent any wool from being bought or sold till he had secured his 20,000 sacks, and as he could impress ships to convey the wool across the Channel, his gains ought to have been enormous; but, being, of course, unable to go into the market himself, he employed ninety-six merchants as his agents, who were to receive one-half of the profits of the whole transaction, and to advance him a sum of 200,000*l.*, on the security of the customs throughout the kingdom. The amount which he realised by this very bad bargain was altogether inadequate to meet his needs, and, with a view to a further subsidy, he sent a circular to the sheriffs of the counties, directing them to gather together the clergy, barons, knights, and citizens, at certain towns, to hear the

Ways and Means.

King's intentions. To the archbishops and bishops he wrote stating that, having tried pacific measures in vain, he was compelled to go to war with France, and ordering them to call the clergy together; 'to let him know quickly how much they would give in alleviation of his expenses;' and to publish and expound his requirements in every church, 'so that our faithful people may grant us liberally a subsidy and pray for us.' He also directed that all the Priories Alien belonging to the King of France should be confiscated, and their value paid into the Treasury.

But though his preparations were thus forward, and his plans apparently ripening for execution, Edward, with that singular duplicity or vacillation which characterised his proceedings (for 'policy' they cannot be called), sent ambassadors to Philip with full powers to settle all causes of quarrel between them. At the same time he wrote to the Duke of Brabant and the Count of Hainault, styling himself 'King of France, Lord of Ireland, and Duke of Aquitaine,' appointing them his vicars-general in France, and charging them to let all people know that France of right belonged to him. He renewed negociations with the burgomasters of the revolted cities in Flanders, and at the same time, with their Count whom they had expelled; proposing a marriage of his daughter with the Count's son; while he offered the hand of the very same princess to the son of the Duke of Austria, the dynastic foe of the Emperor Lewis, with whom he had entered into alliance only a month before. Again, the Empire, as will presently be shown, lay under the Pope's interdict, and this alliance of Edward's with Lewis was made in open disregard of the Pope's authority and express wishes; yet within a fortnight after its formation, Edward, who was determined to stand well with all parties, agreed to receive two cardinals from Avignon to treat for peace, and allowed himself to

Edward's vacillation.

be induced by their exhortations to postpone for a time the invasion of France.

The first blow struck by England was in Flemish waters, and not against the King of France, but against the Count of Flanders. That prince, during the earlier negociations of Edward with his revolted subjects, had got into his power the grandfather of Van Arteveldt, and caused him to be put to death. This act was intended to strike terror into the popular party, but its only effect was to determine the Flemings to throw themselves into the arms of England. A collision occurred between Van Arteveldt and the troops of Count Louis, and the latter fled to Cadsand, an island at the mouth of the Scheldt, where he placed a garrison, under the command of his brother, to intercept the return of the English ambassadors. Edward sent Sir Walter Manny (page 93) with a fleet to dislodge the garrison, and he, landing under cover of the English archery, routed the Count's soldiers and took his brother prisoner. Battle of Cadsand.

The terms finally made with the party of Van Arteveldt would seem to show that Edward was more anxious to secure their lucrative custom than their military co-operation in the war. It was agreed that the neutrality of Flanders should be strictly observed; those parts of the country which held of France were not to be attacked, nor was an English fleet to remain in any Flemish harbour over more than one tide, unless compelled by 'manifest and notorious tempest.' The Flemings were meanwhile to have the right of trading freely at all the ports of England.

SECOND DECADE.

A.D. 1337-1347.

CHAPTER I.

THE FIRST INVASION OF FRANCE.

THE second decade of Edward the Third's reign opens amidst the din of the latest preparations for the great contest, called by French historians 'the Hundred Years' War,' though, like the long Peloponnesian struggle of old, it was not continuous, but ever and anon renewed itself in successive outbursts, with long intervals of comparative languor and inaction.

A.D. 1338.

Although King Edward had gained from his faithful Commons their sanction to his designs upon France, it is impossible, and indeed unnecessary, to believe that such a chimerical project as that of subjugating a proud and warlike race, far exceeding their own in numbers, and alien in origin and institutions from both constituents of the island nation, should ever have been seriously entertained by the mass of the English people. Indeed, so far was the annexation of France from being desired by the nation at large, that serious apprehensions were evidently felt lest, in such an event, our kings should be once more what they had long been, Continental rather than English powers, and England should again become a mere dependency of a richer and more imposing dominion on the mainland. Two years later, in 1340, Edward found it necessary to give an assurance in a public paper that his assumption of the title of King of France should in no way prejudice the

Sanction of Parliament to war.

rights of his English subjects; and in a statute passed the same year it is declared that 'the people of our realm of England, of whatsoever estate or condition they be, shall not at any time be put in subjection or obeisance of us, or of our successors, as Kings of France.'

The fact is, there was nothing in those days corresponding to that judicial tribunal of public opinion with which now rests the ultimate decision on all such questions as that of peace or war. The representatives of the Commons, diffident in the exercise of new-born rights, shrank from giving an independent judgment on State affairs; there were no newspapers, no 'leagues,' no public meetings, and on all questions of imperial policy, the opinion of the King and the nobles was, practically, that of the nation. As for the aristocracy, their want of legitimate occupation and resources made war at all times a welcome opportunity for escaping from the tedium and monotony of a domestic life without books, without news, and without society; in a country home which was more like a garrisoned fortress, surrounded by the squalid huts of an unfriendly and ill-conditioned peasantry. But war with France was war under its most splendid and attractive form. It promised to afford a noble field for the display of the knightly qualities which were most highly prized in that age, when the spirit of chivalry was at the zenith of its ascendency in Europe. The magnitude of the issues involved in battles wherein kings carried their crowns on the point of their swords, the love of adventure, the unbounded career open to successful valour, the rank and gallantry of the combatants, the passionate hopes and fears of the partisans on either side,—all contributed to make the impending struggle with France the centre of interest, and the most brilliant theatre of action in the world.

The two cardinals sent by the Pope remained four

months in England. They had been received with the greatest respect and ceremony, the Duke of Cornwall, Archbishop Stratford, and the Lord Mayor of London meeting them on their arrival, and the King welcoming them in person at the 'lesser hall door of the Palace.' During their stay they lived, as was customary, at the expense of the English clergy, and the cost of their entertainment was fifty marks a day, a sum probably equivalent to £500 of our money; we read moreover of orders of protection given to two ships bound for Bordeaux, to fetch 150 hogsheads of wine for their use. If we may judge from a passage in a contemporary poem, the 'Vision of Piers Ploughman,' (see below, page 266), these prolonged visits were not regarded with much favour in England :—

The cardinals in England.

> 'The Country is the Curseder, that Cardinals Come in,
> And where they Lie and Linger' &c.

They arrived in November, and Edward had given them a promise that he would not invade France before March. But in the meantime King Philip had resolved to make himself master of Guienne before Edward could arrive to defend it, and early in February intelligence was brought to England that the French had already laid siege to certain towns in the Agenois. Notwithstanding this, Edward issued a proclamation on the 24th of that month declaring that, at the instance of the cardinals, he had postponed the invasion of France till Midsummer. But, with characteristic inconsistency, he wrote the day after, to order a levy of 1,000 men from Wales to be sent to Sandwich, and as many more to Portsmouth, for immediate embarkation; and a fortnight later directed his admiral to 'arrest' seventy large ships to carry them and others to Aquitaine, intending to invade from that quarter and from the north at the same time. And now news

reached him that the French had actually landed at Portsmouth and burned it, and were laying waste the country round. Yet still he lingered, and it was not till the month of May that he determined to cast aside the officious meddling of the Pope, and formally revoked his promise to the cardinals. Then issuing orders for the more vigilant guardianship of the south coast, and appointing his eldest son recently created Duke of Cornwall, then eight years old, to be 'Warden of the Realm' in his absence, he sailed from Orewell for Flanders with 200 ships, and first set foot on the Continent 'in anger' on July 22, 1338. It was fortunate that the fleet of transports was strong, for Philip had gathered together a vast number of ships, manned with mercenaries from Genoa and Spain, which constantly cruised about the Channel, intercepting traffic and making descents on the English shores. The utmost alarm was felt, and the 'Great Council,' acting in the name of the young Duke, issued orders for the fortification of Southampton, and of London itself 'with stones and palisades' towards the Thames. A few months later Southampton was attacked, pillaged, and burnt on a Sunday while the inhabitants were at mass.

Edward sails for Flanders. First invasion of France.

Faithful to his engagement to preserve the neutrality of Flanders, Edward disembarked at Antwerp, which belonged to the Duchy of Brabant. On his arrival there, however, he found himself beset with difficulties and mortifications. The allies who had promised him their active co-operation, hung back and began to clamour for the payment of their subsidies, and a year was wasted before he could get them together under his standard. Meanwhile 3,000 only of the 20,000 expected sacks of wool had arrived, and Edward wrote first anxious, and then peremptory, letters home, directing that wool should be taken wherever it

King's want of money.

could be found, 'whether within the liberties or without, of all persons ecclesiastical or secular, sparing none.' Whether the full tale of wool ever arrived or not we have no means of knowing, but anyhow the King's available resources were altogether inadequate to meet his expenditure during this period of forced inactivity; with an army of near 12,000 men quartered in a foreign town, and large subsidies to his allies continually becoming due. To the Duke of Brabant alone he had promised, for what proved to be very doubtful services, the enormous sum of 60,000*l.*, about equivalent to a million of the money of our time. A few months later, such was his distress for money, occasioned by this and other demands, and aggravated by the extravagance of his Court at Antwerp, that he was compelled to pawn his 'great crown, his little crown, and the Queen's crown' to the Archbishop of Trèves, in security for a loan of 61,000 florins.

Difficulties with his allies.

At last, however, on Edward's urgent entreaty, his allies met at the village of Halle, to decide whether they would fight for him or not. They were all of them feudatories of the Empire, and the conclusion they came to was that they could not go to war against France without the consent of their overlord and suzerain Lewis of Bavaria. Now, the Emperor was already in treaty with King Edward for the supply of troops, and many motives combined to dispose him to a closer union of interests. Germany and England had long been resolutely bracing themselves up for political and religious independence, and Lewis, who was a wise and farseeing prince, sympathised with these aspirations, and had not forgotten the fact that the English schoolman William of Ockham had been one of the most vigorous and efficient champions of the Empire against the tyrannical assumptions of the Papacy. Indeed, the

Edward and the Emperor.

chief cause of the Emperor's readiness to take the side of England lay in his relations to the Pope. When the double election to the Empire, already mentioned (page 51), took place, Pope John XXII., one of the most worldly, avaricious, and implacable of all the successors of St. Peter, wishing to secure the Imperial dignity for his own patron, the French King, had opposed the claims of Lewis of Bavaria. When, therefore, the election of that monarch, in defiance of the Pope's remonstrances, was confirmed, John summoned him to lay down his authority, as he had not taken the oath of fealty and obedience to the Papal See. This summons Lewis refused to obey, upon which Pope John straightway excommunicated him, and placed his dominions under an interdict. Thereupon the Emperor had marched in great force upon Italy, got himself crowned King of the Romans in St. Peter's, and set up as Anti-Pope Peter of Corvara, a Franciscan friar. Then began a long struggle for supremacy between Pope and Emperor, in which each professed to depose the other, just as Gregory VII. and Henry IV. had done. At the date of Edward's invasion of France, Lewis, advanced in years, and enfeebled in mind and body, had become a prey to superstitious terrors, and, on the accession of Pope John's successor, Benedict XII., in 1334, had made overtures of submission to the Church. Peter of Corvara, the Anti-Pope, was no more, having before his death confessed himself a heretic. The reigning Pope, whose whole pontificate was a tacit reproach on the turbulence and avarice of his predecessor, would gladly have met the repentant Emperor half-way, had not the jealous tyranny of the French King raised such obstacles that reconciliation became hopeless; for Benedict was wiser in speech than in deeds, and had not what the French call 'the courage of his opinions.' The Emperor at length resolved to espouse the English cause

against France, a determination which was precipitated by the intelligence that Philip had already seized upon Cambrai and certain other towns belonging to the Empire. It was in vain that the Pope wrote to Edward warning and entreating him not to imperil his soul by allying himself with a rebel, under the ban of the Church. A conference was arranged to take place between the King and the Emperor at Coblentz, where the Diet, or meeting of the Electors of the Empire, was about to be held. Edward attended with a numerous and costly retinue; and his progress from Antwerp thither may be minutely traced by a detailed statement, still extant in the King's 'Wardrobe Book,' of his lavish expenditure on the way. A throne was erected for each monarch in the market place, and there they took their seats, surrounded by 17,000 gentlemen, knights, nobles, and sovereigns, who owed fealty to the Emperor. He held a sceptre in his right hand, and a globe in his left, while a knight, on whom that honour devolved by inheritance, held a drawn sword over his head.

Conference at Coblentz.

The ceremony began by the declaration of a protest against the pretensions of the Pope in claiming authority to annul the decision of the electors, 'whereas the Imperial dignity and power came from God alone.' Edward then rose, and addressing the Emperor as supreme over Christendom in things temporal, called him to witness that Philip, in defiance of justice, kept forcible possession of hereditary English territories in France, and usurped the crown of that country, which belonged of right to himself, as the inheritance of his mother. The German sovereign signified his assent to these charges, and declared that Philip, having also invaded the Imperial fiefs, was deprived of all protection from the Emperor till he had made restitution. He concluded by formally appointing the English King his Vicar-General in all parts

of the Empire lying east of the Rhine, and ordering all the princes of the Low Countries to follow him in war for the space of seven years.

Again and again did the Pope write to Edward warning him against uniting himself with Lewis, 'neither King nor Emperor,' whom he accused, in the 'forcible feeble' Latin of Papal Bulls, of favouring 'detestable heresies' and 'horrible horrors,' and 'usurping the title of Emperor with detestable temerity.' Once more ambassadors were sent, at the eleventh hour, to treat for peace with 'Philip our cousin.' Nothing, however, came of these overtures, for shortly afterwards we find the English King signing an agreement with the Dukes of Styria and Carinthia for the hire of 200 men-at-arms to fight with 'Philip, calling himself King of France;' and at length, after many delays, caused by the vacillations of Philip and the Duke of Brabant, Edward, as Vicar of the Empire, summoned all his allies to meet him by a certain day, at Mechlin. This time his citation was promptly obeyed, for thither came the shifty Duke of Brabant himself, and all the rest, with the Margrave of Brandenburg, the last being the son of the Emperor, whom that potentate had sent with 100 lances as his representative. The arrival of this prince must have been an agreeable surprise to the English sovereign; for Philip had despatched John, King of Bohemia, who afterwards fell at Creci, as his emissary to the Emperor; and had persuaded him to return Edward's money, on the ground that it was unworthy of his imperial position to be in the pay of another Power.

Rendezvous at Mechlin.

And now Edward, in September 1339, having first, according to feudal custom, formally defied King Philip, opened the campaign by marching upon Cambrai with an army of some 40,000 men. The city was strong and well defended, and the

Siege of Cambrai.

Allies, seeing little progress made and the winter approaching, resolved, under the advice of Artois, to raise the siege and invade the kingdom of France. When the army reached the banks of the Scheldt, the boundary of the Empire, the Counts of Hainault and Namur, who had joined the army on its march, fell back; declaring that the authority of the Imperial Vicar expired the moment he set foot on the territory of the French King, for whom, as their feudal chief, they must henceforth fight if they fought at all.

Edward, too deeply imbued with the spirit of feudal chivalry to show any resentment at this desertion, dismissed his punctilious allies with thanks for past services, and advancing into France, ravaged and burnt the country seventy-two leagues wide, from Bapaume to St. Quentin. When Philip heard that the invader had entered France, he marched to meet him, supported, on his side, by the Kings of Bohemia and Scotland, the King Consort of Navarre, and a great array of princes and nobles, as far as Vironfosse, where he took up his position. Thither a herald was sent from Edward's camp to demand a battle; and on the morning of the day appointed both kings heard 'mass, each among his own people at his own quarters, and many took the Sacrament and confessed themselves.' Edward then marshalled his forces on foot, and, as afterwards at Creci, in three divisions, with the archers and Welsh lancers in front of the men-at-arms; and mounting his palfrey, rode from 'battle to battle,' recommending to his troops 'the care of his honour.' Philip also drew up his forces, and in such brilliant array that the chronicler Froissart breaks out into rapturous admiration of the sight of the army ready for the combat. But Vironfosse was not destined to be one of the world's famous battle-fields, for, at the last moment apparently, an appeal was made to Philip's reason, and another to

his superstition, which induced him to decline an engagement and march his troops away to Paris. His Council represented to him that the lateness of the season would soon compel the English to retire, and it was in his own power, by declining battle, to render the invasion fruitless without having to strike a blow. At the same time letters were brought him from Robert, Count of Provence and King of Sicily, who had the reputation of a consummate astrologer, prognosticating certain defeat if he ever encountered the King of England in person on the field. In a very interesting extant letter describing this campaign to his son at home, Edward says that on the day after that fixed for the battle Philip had taken up a stronger position, and 'so hastily that 1,000 of his horsemen had sunk in a marsh,' and that on the day following, the allies, ascertaining that the French were in retreat, declared that they would stay no longer. He had then no choice but to retire upon Brussels, and, if possible, find means for defraying the enormous debt incurred by this altogether unprofitable expedition.

Philip withdraws without fighting.

Some idea of the cost of campaigning in these days may be gathered from an account which has been preserved of the expenses of the army before Calais a few years later. From this it appears that bishops and earls received 6*s.* 8*d.* a day, barons 4*s.*, knights 2*s.*, and guides and esquires 1*s.* Mounted archers and hoblers (or irregular light cavalry) were paid 6*d.* a day, bowmen on foot 3*d.*, Welshmen 2*d.* For another expedition like the present a few years later, there were ordered 7,300 bows, 349,200 arrows, 2,000 separate heads for arrows, 50 dozen spare cords for the bows. 'Painted' bows were worth 1*s.* 6*d.* each, 'white' bows 12*d.*, the sheaf of 24 arrows 12*d.*, and the arrow heads were 12 a penny; which prices

Cost of campaigning.

may be multiplied by 15, if we wish to compare them with those of the present day. While his army lay before Cambrai, Edward had written to Archbishop Stratford and the Duke of Cornwall, authorising them 'to receive fines, to grant pardons, to sell permission to marry the wards of the Crown,' and to raise money by all other expedients known under the feudal system. On his return to Brussels from the expedition, finding himself in great straits for money, he determined to sail for England to raise what was needful to pay his debts, and to provide for a new campaign, on which he had already resolved. Before starting, however, he formed, under the advice of Van Arteveldt, a new treaty, offensive and defensive, with the Duke of Brabant, in which the chief cities of Flanders were included. The Flemings, by a separate instrument, agreed to recognise him as King of France, declare war against that kingdom, and begin the new campaign in the spring, with the siege of Tournai. He then, to satisfy the remaining scruples of the French Flemings, for the first time quartered the fleurs-de-lys with the English leopards, adopting the motto 'Dieu et mon droit.' It must not pass unnoticed that on the very day on which the commissioners of the treaty with the Flemish cities were appointed, he again authorised ambassadors to treat with their exiled Count Louis for the marriage of his daughter with the heir of Flanders.

A.D. 1340. Correspondence with Benedict XII.

And now once more the Pope wrote to Edward, endeavouring to persuade him to break off his alliance with the Emperor and make peace with the King of France, urging that his Flemish and German friends were not to be trusted; that when it suited their purpose 'they would leave him to shift for himself, and shuffle their burdens from off their own backs on to his;' and even offering to go himself to negociate personally with the English King. On receiv-

ing the Pope's letter, Edward again made friendly overtures to Philip, but suddenly growing as weary as all readers of this history must be, of fruitless negociations, he issued a proclamation from Ghent which he ordered to be fixed to the doors of all Flemish churches in places bordering on France. In this document he again recited his claim to the French crown, which had been usurped by Philip of Valois, who, taking advantage of his tender years and ignorance of law, had extorted from him a homage prejudicial to his rights; and had, further, invaded his lands in Guienne, assisted his rebellious subjects in Scotland, and harassed his commerce in the narrow seas. He therefore proclaimed to all men that he revoked his homage, and took upon himself the royal dignity of France, of which he was the rightful heir. This step of Edward's drew a final remonstrance from the Pope. The letter which Benedict wrote on this occasion was very unlike the usual style of Papal correspondence, representing as it did, in wise, temperate and affectionate language that the English King's ambition was likely to lead to great disasters and disgrace;—that the Flemings and the Teutons, notorious for their inconstancy and disloyalty, would leave him in the lurch as soon as his treasures were exhausted;—that he had acted hastily in assuming the royal arms and title of France before he had advanced one single step towards the conquest of that country;—that the attempt to make himself King of France against the wishes of the people was impracticable and hopeless;—and, as for abstract right, that he could have no legal pretensions to the crown unless females were capable of inheriting, which was contrary to the immemorial custom of the kingdom;—and that, if females were capable of transmitting an inheritance which they could not themselves enjoy, there were others then living, the offspring of daughters of French kings, and

nearer in the line of direct succession than Edward himself. This last statement was true, and important in its bearing upon the question at issue. At the time when Edward first put forward his claim in 1328, he based it upon the fact that he was the nearest male relative of the king last deceased; but in the year 1332 Joan, Queen of Navarre, daughter of King Louis Hutin, had given birth to a son, who, on her death, became King of Navarre, and who ought now, by the reasoning on which Edward relied, to have been King of France (page 179).

The Pope's letter was unfortunately a long time on its way, and only reached Edward after he had returned to England, and had already gone too far to withdraw, in his preparations for his second French campaign.

His creditors would not allow him to leave Flanders till he had promised solemnly to return within a certain time, leaving four English earls as hostages in the hands of his allies. Queen Philippa also remained in Flanders, being in expectation of the birth of her fifth child, who was born during his father's absence, and was christened John, and surnamed of Gaunt (that is, Ghent) after the place of his nativity.

Edward returns to England.

While the King was away from England on his wars a Parliament had been held which is remarkable as being the first in which the influence of the Commons in legislation is clearly traceable. The pressure of the King's necessities was then beginning indirectly, but not less surely, to break down the strongholds of feudal prerogative and to promote the cause of political independence. Archbishop Stratford, the Chancellor, who had just come back from the campaign, addressing the 'Grauntz' (or great men), the nobles, prelates, and also the Commons of the realm (the last probably admitted as it were 'to

Proceedings in Parliament, Oct. 13, 1339.

the bar' of the house), declared to them how the King was no less than £300,000 in debt, and required a liberal subsidy to pay off his creditors and to prosecute the war.

Though there had been but little in the first campaign to gratify the national pride, no question of the expediency of undertaking a second seems to have been raised in Parliament. A vote of a tenth was proposed by the King's Council in the nobles' chamber, to which they agreed, but upon certain conditions; among others that a charter should be granted to them providing that the *maletolt* (or '*illegally enhanced*' wool tax), which had begun in the reign of Edward I. and had been recently levied, should never be levied again, and that the grant now to be made should not be drawn into a precedent. The Commons, who for deliberation had separated from the nobles after hearing the Chancellor's statement, now declared that they could not grant the aid without first consulting 'the commons of their counties,' a stipulation which carries us on in thought to our own times. It is important to note the diffident tone of the Commons at this period, and their evident reluctance to undertake the responsibilities of legislation, as compared with the loud and peremptory language of their remonstrances in the later years of the reign. For example, their opinion was asked as to the best means of protecting the south coasts and the commerce of the country against the ravages of the French. The island of Jersey had been taken, and the English shipping and the dwellers on the southern seaboard were at Philip's mercy, of which they received but little, for his policy was one of aggression, audacity, and destruction abroad, as it was one of protraction and avoidance at home. The Commons answered that these were matters of which they had no knowledge, and begged to be 'excused for advising upon them;' that 'this was

the business of the wardens of the Cinque Ports, "who had honours above all the commons of the land," and who paid no taxes, because on them devolved the duty of guarding the coasts.' They also begged that two sword-girt knights, not sheriffs or royal officers, should be summoned from each shire to the next Parliament, to represent the Commons.

When the Commons re-assembled Jan. 19, 1340, after consulting their 'constituents,' they agreed to make a grant of 30,000 sacks of wool in consideration of the redress of grievances, and an immediate and unconditional subsidy of 2,050 sacks, as the King's wants were urgent. Selected representatives of the mariners of the Cinque Ports were summoned to attend the Parliament, and they and other guardians of the coasts agreed to furnish 100 ships, half at their own cost and half at that of the Government. Before the grant had been actually made, King Edward returned, and attended in person at a session held in March 1340, to which a large number of merchants were invited to come for a 'colloquy,' to discuss the state of affairs and submit their opinion to the Parliament. The system of summoning special 'class' parliaments, was very often acted upon in Edward's reign, and their frequency is an evidence of the growing importance of the interests of what may be called, by anticipation, the middle class. They have been aptly compared to the 'commissions' of the present day, whose business it is to collect facts and evidence, and to express opinions intended to serve as a basis for future legislation. The Parliament of 1340 finally agreed to make the King an extraordinary grant for two years to come, of the '9th lamb, 9th fleece, and 9th sheaf.' The tithe would seem to have been first deducted, and then one part taken for the King's use, i.e., the 9th part of 10-*less-by*-1. The

The Commons grant a subsidy.

citizens and burgesses were to grant the '9th part of (the estimated value of) their chattels,' and 'foreign merchants not living in cities, and others that dwell in forests and wastes, and did not live of tillage or store of sheep, were to be set lawfully at the value of the fifteen,' but 'the poor and those that lived of their labour' were not to be liable to the fifteenth. They further granted 40*s.* to be taken of every last of leather, 40*s.* of every sack of wool, and 40*s.* of every 300 woolfels (or skins with the fleece on) that passed the sea. It should be borne in mind that the 'Counties Palatine' Durham and Chester, being unrepresented in the Commons, were also exempt from Parliamentary taxation: they, however, made a like grant on their own account, and the clergy gave a ninth of their sheaves, fleeces, and lambs.

In return for these very liberal subsidies, among the concessions granted were:—

(1.) That special High Commissioners should be appointed at every Parliament to hear complaints of the delay of justice, and to give judgment themselves.

(2.) That the sheriffs, who seem to have abused their powers, should, instead of holding their places for ten years, as hitherto, be elected for one year only.

(3.) That the law of Edward I. should be re-enacted, requiring an uniform standard of weights and measures throughout the kingdom.

(4.) That the present subsidy should not be made a precedent for additional imposts, but that henceforth all grants in aid should be given only by consent of all the estates of Parliament.

(5.) That the King's taking the title of King of France should never be held to imply subjection of the English to the French Crown.

(6.) That a restraint should be put upon the arbitrary powers of the King's purveyors. These were officers

whose duty it was, not, as now, to sell, but to buy, provisions, forage, and other supplies for the King's use, especially on his journeys; and it was henceforth provided that they should not compel people to sell to them save only at a price agreed upon between buyer and seller; that the sheriff of the county should state the number of the King's horses 'for which, and no more,' purveyance was to be made; and that he should take care that the county was not overcharged as to the number of grooms in the King's retinue, but that there should be 'for every horse a knave, without bringing women pages or dogs with them.' The laws for the restraint of purveyance were re-enacted again and again—notably in the Parliaments of 1351 and 1362, in the latter of which (such was the hatred inspired by their exactions) it was ordained that for the future the 'henious' name of 'purveyor' should be changed to that of 'buyer.' This Act may be regarded as the most distinctively marked step of constitutional progress in the reign of Edward III.

The form of proceeding in making laws will be understood from a description of the steps taken in Parliament on this occasion. A *petition* was presented to the King begging for redress of grievance, the introduction of a new enactment or the readjustment of an old one; and the Commons presented their 'petitions' with profound submission, kneeling on their knees. The King acting through his Council, considered the prayers of the petition, and, as the case might be, granted or rejected, or reserved them for future consideration. The petitions to which the King acceded were then embodied in a Statute, or Act of Parliament. The Statute began with a confirmation of rights and liberties previously granted; then followed a recitation of the prayers of the petitions with the answer to them, in the form of enactments, of an affirmative or a negative,

Way of making laws.

a permissive or a prohibitory character. New statutes, before the invention of printing, were made known to the people by written copies being sent to all the sheriffs, who were directed to have them 'published and cried in every county in England, at all courts, fairs, and markets.'

Edward was now nearly ready for his second invasion of France. But as the last subsidy voted by the Parliament was chiefly *in kind*, he had to borrow 20,000 marks of the City of London, £11,720 from one Anthony Bach (to redeem his 'great golden crown and the little crown' out of pawn at Trèves); and issued a commission to the Bishop of Lincoln and others to raise money for him, 'because' he wrote, 'you know that, for the conduct of our war in parts beyond sea, and also for the salvation of our kingdom of England *and of the English Church*, we are obliged to spend innumerable sums of money every day.'

Edward sails on his second expedition against France.

Just as he was on the point of starting, information was brought to Archbishop Stratford that King Philip had got together a large fleet, manned by Normans and Genoese, and that it was lying in the harbour of Sluys, ready to intercept the King's passage. Edward, who possessed his full share of the fierce courage of his Angevin ancestors, chafed rather than daunted by this alarming intelligence, issued an order that every available vessel in the southern and eastern ports should be impressed, manned with soldiers, and got ready for fighting. The Archbishop having vainly warned the King of his danger, resigned his office of Chancellor, and Admiral Sir Robert Morley entreated him to desist from so dangerous an undertaking; but he only flew into a rage, exclaiming, 'I shall go; those who are afraid where no fear is may stay at home.'

The English fleet, some 200 strong, but composed of

all sorts of craft, set sail from Orewell in the forenoon of June 22, 1340, and the next evening, coming to anchor off Blankenburg, discovered in the still distant harbour of Sluys a forest of masts just visible above an intervening neck of land. Three knights were put on shore to reconnoitre, and brought word that they had counted 200 ships of war, besides smaller vessels, and nineteen ships so large that they had never seen the like, and with them the English 'Christopher,' taken by the French the year before. In a curious and interesting letter from his father to Prince Edward, preserved in the archives of the city of London—the earliest extant 'despatch' giving account of a naval engagement—the number of the enemy's ships is given as 190, but this would seem to be an underestimate if, as the King also states, their fleet carried 35,000 men. During the night the enemy left their moorings, and were seen at daybreak drawn up in four lines across the passage of the estuary on which the port of Sluys opens. Their ships were chained together, and carried towers on their tops, filled with stones and other missiles to hurl down upon the decks of the English vessels. King Edward's first care was to place 'fifty noble ladies of honour,' who were going abroad to wait on Queen Philippa, in light, swift sailers under a strong guard. He next stood out to sea, in order to get wind and sun in his rear, and then bore down with irresistible force and speed on the foremost line of the enemy. As soon as they had got within range, the English bowmen poured in such a terrible volley of arrows that the Genoese crossbowmen in the French ships, so far from being able effectively to reply, were driven from the decks; and at the first shock of ship against ship the English men-at-arms boarded with loud shouts, sword and axe in hand, and struck down all resistance. The 'Christopher' was soon recaptured,

Battle of Sluys, June 24.

manned with exulting English sailors and archers, and advancing with the rest broke the second line, and poured down destruction from her lofty decks on the smaller vessels composing it. At this moment arrived Sir R. Morley with the fleet of the northern ports, upon which a panic struck the third line, and the men, knowing that their ships were inextricably grappled together, leaped in their terror into the sea, and it is said that in this way no less than 2,000 perished. The fourth line, consisting of sixty large vessels, still remained unbroken, and continued to offer a gallant resistance to the English fleet, till night-fall enabled the few which were not altogether disabled to make good their retreat. It is said that of the English navy two ships only were lost, while out of the great fleet of the French a few stragglers only escaped, and 25,000 to 30,000 men were slain.

And now, arriving at the scene of his intended operations with plenty of ready money and the fresh renown of his victory, the English King found no difficulty in mustering his allies for the long-planned siege of Tournai. That city was at once invested by an army of more than 100,000 men, 40,000 of whom were Flemish troops, led by Van Arteveldt; while another host scarcely inferior in numbers advanced under Robert of Artois to the siege of St. Omer. This latter force met with a disaster which no human foresight could have provided against. After a repulse under the walls of St. Omer, Robert was encamped in the vale of Cassel. A detachment of his army having been surprised in the village of Arques, some of the fugitives had reached his camp in the middle of the night; upon which a sudden and unaccountable panic arose and spread through the host, giving a colour to the popular belief that D'Artois was bewitched; and an army of 50,000 men, tearing down their tents, and leaving baggage and arms behind

Siege of Tournai.

them, fled in every direction and dispersed themselves over the country.

Tournai meanwhile was bravely defended by a garrison of 30,000, and Philip, with a great following, had advanced to its relief. Matters seemed now to be drawing nigh a crisis; but the crisis never came, for the French King had determined again to try his hitherto successful policy of exhausting the resources and the patience of his rival by a 'masterly inactivity' and avoidance of battle. Edward, chafing at delay, which he had before found so fatal, wrote to King Philip a letter highly characteristic of the chivalric customs and modes of thought then dominant in Europe. It was dated in the 'first year of our reign over France and the fourteenth over England,' and proposed to Philip of Valois to fight at a given time and place, either in single combat, or each at the head of 100 men, or each at the head of his army.' Philip answered that he had seen a letter brought to his Court for 'Philip of Valois,' but as it was manifestly not addressed to *him*, it was not for him to reply to it; but he took the opportunity of saying, 'Since you, in breach of your liege homage and fealty, have entered our territory, and done great damage to our realm, we intend to chase you out of it when we think proper.' The siege apparently making no progress, Edward determined to reduce the garrison by starvation. But he was getting tired out, and his attention was demanded elsewhere, for Philip's lieutenants in the south had occupied a great part of Guienne, and the Scots, aided by France, had recaptured Edinburgh, and were making a raid into the northern counties of England. He was therefore disposed to come to terms, and Philip, who had reason to know that the provisions of the garrison would hold out but a few days longer, was ready to meet him half-way. At this juncture Jane, Countess

Dowager of Hainault, mother of the Queen of England and sister of the Queen of France, came out of the convent in which she had lived since her husband's death, to the English camp, and on her knees besought Edward to raise the siege. A truce for nine months, in which Scotland and Aquitaine were included, having been agreed upon, Edward withdrew sullenly and reluctantly from before Tournai, weighed down with debt and embittered by the failure of his second great undertaking.

He had repeatedly written home to his ministers for money; but the supply sent had fallen far short of his expectations, and indeed of the sum granted by Parliament.

Suspicions of the fidelity and disinterestedness of his ministers, and especially of the Archbishop, beginning to be whispered to the King by sycophantic and profligate courtiers, who hated Stratford for his lofty and perhaps somewhat aggressive morality, he stole away with his Queen to Zealand, leaving the Earl of Derby 'in pawn' for his debts; and then crossing the Channel—a three days' passage, in rough November weather—he sailed unannounced up the Thames, and landed at midnight under the Tower.

Edward's sudden return.

Edward had doubtless real causes of exasperation. Moreover kings are but men, and no man's temper is the better after his bile has been churned for sixty or seventy hours at sea. His mood on landing was so bitter and savage that he seemed only to look for victims on whom to visit his displeasure. He found the Tower unguarded, so that pirates or French marauders might have entered it as easily as himself, and instantly threw the governor and his officers into prison. Next morning he arrested the Lord Treasurer, and the High Chancellor

Robert Stratford, brother, and successor in that office, of the Archbishop,—'for having neglected,' as was alleged, 'to raise or duly transmit to the King the moneys granted by Parliament.' Both being bishops, they could not legally be imprisoned, and had to be immediately released. But the Great Seal was committed to Sir Robert Bouchier, and the Treasury to another layman. The Archbishop, on whom the chief odium rested as president of the defaulting Council, the moment he heard of the King's arrival, fled to Canterbury and took refuge in the Priory of Christ Church, not because he was guilty, as at first sight appeared, but because he knew that the King, in his present unreasonable mood, would hold him responsible for evils which he had done his best to counteract. He was now summoned to appear before his Sovereign, but instead of obeying, he wrote him a letter accusing him of having by his acts, done under evil advice, contravened the Great Charter, and the laws which by his coronation oath he was bound to maintain, to the great peril of his soul; and reminding him of the lessons to be learned from the fate of his father, whose arbitrary acts had cost him the love of his people. This letter being unanswered, he then preached a sermon to the same effect in Canterbury Cathedral, which he concluded by excommunicating all (except the King and his family) who should 'disturb the peace of the realm or lay violent hands on the clergy.' Upon this the King wrote to the Prior of Christ Church a letter for general publication, in which he laid the whole of the blame of the miscarriage of the expedition at the Archbishop's door. Stratford replied by another political sermon, in which he argued that it was not possible to collect the taxes of a whole year during the two months which the siege of Tournai lasted, and that had they been collected, 'they were already forestalled and mort-

Archbishop Stratford.

gaged for debts before contracted.' This discourse he got written out by his scribes, and copies were sent round to be read aloud in every church in his province; at the same time he wrote to the King advising him to summon a Parliament, before which he declared that he was ready to answer for himself. To this step the King's councillors replied by the document known as the 'Famosus Libellus,' which was sent to all bishops, deans, and chapters for publication. It contained a recapitulation of all the charges against the Archbishop already urged and already repelled, in the course of which they compared him to a 'reed running into the hand that leans thereon,' and applied to him as the King's most trusted counsellor the vulgar adage. 'Mus in pera, serpens in gremio, ignis in sinu.' They further stated that the Archbishop, though furnished with a safe-conduct, had refused to appear except in full Parliament, which, at that time, 'ex causis rationabilibus,' could not conveniently be held.

At length, however, a Parliament was summoned, and Stratford came up to London, crossed the river with a grand retinue of bishops, priests, knights and men-at-arms, and presented himself at the A.D. 1341. door of Westminster Hall. He was refused admittance by the King's seneschal and chamberlain till he had first appeared in the Court of Exchequer. With this requirement he complied, but on again presenting himself at the door of Parliament, he found the entrance barred as before by the King's officers. The Peers, however, began to show signs of resenting this violation of their privileges, and petitioned the King to reaffirm the rule that a Peer impeached by the Crown should not be compelled to plead before any other tribunal than the High Court of Parliament. The King at first made difficulties, but the necessity of procuring a supply triumphed over his reluctance and compelled him to give his assent. He was

induced to do so the more readily because he was beginning to feel the loss of the Archbishop's counsels and wished for a reconciliation with him. Stratford's enemies drew up articles of accusation, which he met openly in Parliament, demanding a trial before his peers in accordance with the Great Charter. A committee was appointed to investigate the rights of the case, but the day after, the King came down to Parliament and declared in the presence of that assembly that he admitted the Archbishop to his grace, and acquitted him of all the charges brought against him. Two years afterwards the proceedings of the impeachment were formally pronounced to be null and void, but in the meantime, and up to the time of his death, Stratford was again the most confidential adviser of the King. The age of Edward III. was barren of great statesmen, but Stratford was one of the best and most disinterested of that King's advisers: 'The only reward he got,' as we are told, 'was that upon his death Edward confiscated and seized for his own use, all that the Archbishop left behind him.' His case is chiefly noteworthy as affording probably the first, and certainly the latest, instance of a prelate's right to be tried as a peer 'by his peers' being recognised by Parliament.

The next measure brought forward in the session was the inevitable demand for redress of grievances. The King granted all the prayers of the petitioners, and with an alacrity which must have surprised those members who were not acquainted with the fact that he had previously signed a paper secretly protesting against them as prejudicial to the rights of the Crown, and extorted from him under pressure of necessity. Edward had come with very little dignity or credit out of his conflict with the Archbishop; but the course which he took in respect of these petitions can only be described as sneaking, treacherous, and, morality apart, altogether unworthy of the 'foremost knight of Europe.' They

related chiefly to the privileges of Peers already recognized, and to the malversation of the Royal officers, who, as the law stood, were practically irresponsible. It was therefore demanded that in every Parliament—which body it will be borne in mind was at this time as a general rule elected and dissolved every year—'the King should, on the third day, take into his hands the offices of all the ministers, thus to abide for four or five days, so that they be put to answer to every complaint, and if default be found be punished by judgment of the Peers.' An express exemption was made in favour of the Barons of the Exchequer and the Justices of King's Bench and Common Pleas. Nothing could be more reasonable and moderate than these petitions, and the King gave them his royal assent, had them as usual embodied in a statute and published under the Great Seal. Yet four months later, with an almost cynical disregard of honour and morality, he issued a circular to the sheriffs of the counties stating that the 'obstinacy of the Parliament in demanding things contrary to the laws and customs of our realm of England, and to our prerogatives and rights royal, compelled us to dissimulate, and pretend to grant what was contrary to sound policy; and we now therefore will and decree that the said statute be null and void.'

It will hardly be wondered at that after taking such a step as this the King hesitated for two years to face a new Parliament. At the expiration of that time, however, he had the effrontery and the address to prevail on that body (assuring them that their requests would be granted in substance without it), to erase by their own act and authority the obnoxious instrument from the Statute Book. Churchmen have not failed to remark that this revocation of the statute, the most indefensible act of Edward's reign, was perpetrated while the King was acting under the advice of a *lay* ministry, and the first lay Chancellor.

SECOND DECADE.—A.D. 1337-1347.

CHAPTER II.

TRANSACTIONS IN SCOTLAND, BRITTANY, AND GUIENNE.

THE twelve months after Stratford's impeachment were taken up by the English and French Kings in simultaneous negociations for peace and preparations for war. Edward gained new allies in the Kings of Arragon and Majorca, but experienced a discouraging blow in the desertion of the Emperor, who was persuaded by Philip to back out of the English alliance; writing a letter which he began by offering himself as mediator between England and France, and concluded by withdrawing from King Edward the title which he had conferred of Imperial Vicar. As the feudatory princes of the Empire could, after this, no longer fight under the English banner, and as, about the same time, the Scots were beginning to cause alarm in the north of England, King Edward might now have been disposed to give effect to the peace negociations which were continually on foot, had not an unexpected combination of affairs arisen, which rekindled his hopes and opened for him a pathway into the heart of France.

A.D. 1342.

Emperor withdraws from the English alliance.

But before resuming the main thread of the war it may be as well to describe the events which had taken place north of the Tweed during the English King's absence on the Continent. In 1336 he had left the command of his army in Scotland to three English earls, for Balliol, though titular King, had by Edward's orders withdrawn beyond the border, and occupied himself in defending the Marches.

A.D. 1341. Affairs of Scotland.

The adherents of the Bruce, after the violent disruption of their latest compromise with England—a compromise by which one of the chiefs of the national party had been appointed Governor of Scotland in Balliol's name—had placed themselves under the leadership of the gallant Sir Andrew Murray of Bothwell, as regent for the young King of Scotland, now self-exiled, as will be remembered, in France.

Dunbar, a fortress of great strength and importance belonging to the Earl of March, was besieged by the English under the Earl of Salisbury, and its obstinate defence afforded the first of the many examples of female heroism in the reign of Edward III. Black Agnes of Dunbar, Countess of March, and daughter of the famous Randolph, Earl of Murray, kept the besiegers for five months at bay, sharing the dangers and privations of the siege with the men of the garrison, taking her rounds upon the ramparts, encouraging her soldiers, and scoffing at the efforts of the enemy. Two ships from England had come to help the besiegers, and barred the mouth of the port against the entrance of supplies; but a gallant Scotch captain ran the blockade in the darkness of night and introduced a shipload of provisions, upon which Salisbury, in despair of reducing the place, withdrew from the siege. The Scotch not only held their own, but drove the English for refuge out of the open country within the walls of five great fortresses, two of which before long fell into their hands. Perth and Stirling offered a more vigorous resistance. Robert the Steward, now sole Regent of Scotland, on the death of Murray of Bothwell, laid siege to Perth, and sent off Sir William Douglas, the 'Knight of Liddesdale' and the 'flower of chivalry,' to France for help, just at the time when King Edward was advancing to the siege of Cambrai. For ten weeks

Siege of Dunbar,

and of Perth.

the Regent continued to assault the stronghold of Perth, and had almost despaired of taking it when Douglas sailed up the Tay with five French ships of war, whose arrival dismayed the hearts of the English garrison. The actual surrender of the castle, however, is attributed to the occurrence of an eclipse at midday, which lasted two hours, and held both armies in suspense and superstitious terror. The Scotch were the first to recover from this stupor, and made so sudden and fierce an assault upon the defences that the garrison at once laid down their arms. It is related, as showing the dreadful condition to which the country was reduced by these wars, that soon after the siege of Perth the wild deer came down from the mountains and wandered about in herds under the walls of the town. Stirling was next invested, and it was the siege of this stronghold which now, as once before with such disastrous consequences, provoked an English Edward to put himself at the head of an army and march northward to chastise the Scotch. The King got as far as Newcastle on his way, but there he learned that his supporting fleet had been dispersed by a storm, and that Stirling had already fallen. Immediately afterwards Sir W. Douglas gained possession of Edinburgh by stratagem, but by this time the exhaustion of the country was such that the Scots were willing to make a truce for six months; on condition that, unless within this time the young King, David Bruce, returned to Scotland with a sufficient force to hold his own and drive out the English, the Scottish people would make their submission to England. This truce was, shortly after, extended for two years, during which Bruce was able to return to his desolated kingdom.

Truce with Scotland.

The Duchy of Brittany was one of the great fiefs of the French crown. The second Duke had, unfortunately

for his country, married twice, and had male issue by both marriages. His first wife bore him three sons—Guy, Count of Penthièvre, who died during the lifetime of his father, leaving an only daughter, Jeanne; Peter, also, who died young; and John, who succeeded his father in the dukedom. By his second wife he had a fourth son, who inherited from his mother the title of De Montfort. Guy's daughter, Jeanne, married Charles of Blois, King Philip's nephew, being the son of Margaret, his youngest sister. Duke John died childless, leaving his half-brother, De Montfort, male heir to the Duchy; a position which De Montfort fully determined to make good, though on his niece's marriage to Charles of Blois he had sworn fealty to her and her consort. For the principle of the Salic law, which regulated the succession to the French throne, does not appear to have extended to the fiefs of France; and, indeed, Brittany had before passed, and did so again, to a female. King Philip therefore did not stultify himself, as has been said, by espousing the cause of his nephew, who claimed, and was actually installed in, the Duchy, in right of female inheritance.

A.D. 1342. Affairs of Brittany.

De Montfort was first in the field. By force or intrigue he succeeded in gaining possession of the strongholds of the Duchy. At Nantes, the capital, he was welcomed and acknowledged by the inhabitants, and having secured the treasure accumulated there by the last duke, he proceeded to Brest, which he took by storm; and thence to Rennes, which was surrendered to him by the popular party, though the nobles, who were throughout the contest on the side of Charles of Blois, would have resisted to the last extremity. The strong fortress of Hennebon, overlooking the sea, next yielded to him; then Vannes and Auray; and before his rival had struck a blow

De Montfort gets possession of the fortresses.

De Montfort was actually master of Brittany. But now he was summoned by King Philip to Paris, to submit his claims to the decision of the Peers of France, the highest tribunal of the realm. He attended with 400 knights in his train; but, on the announcement of the adverse sentence which he fully expected, he fled from Paris in disguise, with only four attendants, at the opening of the gates in the early morning. His escape was not discovered till he had rejoined his Countess at Nantes; but after a short stay there, knowing that he had nothing to expect from his own suzerain but vengeance and punishment, he threw off his allegiance and hastening into the presence of King Edward, who was then at Windsor, besought his protection, and offered to do him liege homage for the Duchy of Brittany. Edward, acting under the advice of Robert of Artois, accepted his homage, revived in his favour the Earldom of Richmond held by his father, and promised him the help of England in maintaining his quarrel against Charles of Blois. The English King was himself predisposed to espouse De Montfort's cause. He saw that his own wider and more ambitious designs, now checked by the defection of his allies in the north, would be furthered by a close alliance with an enterprising, valiant, and successful adventurer, who was then in actual possession of a territory affording a safe approach, to an invader from the west, into the very vitals of France. Thus were two aspirants to dominion united together by a community of interests, though the abstract claims put forward by each were contradictory and mutually destructive. It was distinctly understood, however, that this interference in the affairs of Brittany was not to be considered a breach of the peace between the French and English Kings. Meanwhile the royal troops of France, 8,000 strong, with a levy

Throws himself into the arms of England.

The French attack him.

of 5,000 vassals and 3,000 Genoese crossbow-men, under the Duke of Normandy heir to the throne, the Marshal, Lewis of Spain, and a brilliant roll of royal dukes and nobles, were advancing into Brittany to crush De Montfort. They opened the campaign by undermining, and thus taking, the strong border-fortress of Chantonceaux, and then advanced down the Loire upon Nantes. De Montfort was there, but as yet no reinforcements had arrived from England, and he was unable to keep the field against the invading force. By the treachery or blundering—it is hard to say which—of the governor, Henry of Leon, one of De Montfort's first and best friends in Brittany, the city was taken, and in it De Montfort himself, who was carried off to Paris and imprisoned in the Tower of the Louvre. But his wife, Jeanne De Montfort, sister of the Count of Flanders, 'Cœur de Lion,' as Froissart calls her,—summoned together the people of Rennes, and standing in the market-place, with tears in her eyes and her infant son in her arms, called upon them to defend the cause of the child. 'Sirs,' she said, 'be not dismayed at the loss of my lord; he was but one man, and here you see my little child, who will be his restorer, if God will.' Her appeal was answered by acclamations. Rennes was victualled and put in a state of defence, for the Countess was well supplied with money, and she herself, taking her little son with her, went round the country from garrison to garrison, supplying them with stores and arms, and inspiriting the troops with her own courage and enthusiasm, 'though she wore deep mourning in her heart.' At last, in anticipation of the arrival of ships from England, she shut herself up in the famous fortress of Hennebon, which looks down over the estuary of the Blavet upon the sea.

This was in the dead of winter, and she knew that with the early spring the army of Charles would be before

the walls of Hennebon; so she sent her boy over to England into the protection of King Edward, and urgently entreated the speedy despatch of the promised aid; engaging, on her part, to open to the English King all the strong places which she held for her husband, and to affiance her son to one of Edward's daughters, who was thus to become Duchess of Brittany.

And now Charles appeared at the head of his forces before Hennebon, and the assault began with a vigour inspired by the belief that, if only the formidable Countess could be captured and sent to join her husband in the Louvre, the war would be at an end. No succours arrived from England, but the defence made by the garrison was no less determined than the attack; the besiegers were repulsed, and more than one successful sally was made into their camp. The Countess herself, clad in armour, rode from post to post, from street to street; she made her ladies pick up the paving-stones and carry them to the ramparts, from whence they could be launched, along with lighted brands and quicklime, on the heads of the assailants. One day, seeing that the French army, intent upon an attack, had left their camp unguarded, she sallied forth from the opposite side of the fortress at the head of 200 horse, and set the tents and baggage on fire. Then, finding her retreat to the gates cut off by a body of the enemy, she rode for life to a neighbouring castle; issuing from which at an unexpected moment, she fought her way back through the French lines to Hennebon, and was received with shouts of acclamation by the garrison. But fatigue and famine had begun at last to tell upon the gallant defenders, and the Bishop of Leon, one of the partisans of De Montfort, was, in spite of the entreaties of the Countess, already in the French camp, engaged in arranging the terms of capitulation, when she, who had taken her stand

Siege of Hennebon.

on the ramparts, first caught sight of long-expected sails in the offing, and cried out, 'I see the English succours, the English succours I have so longed for!' She was not mistaken: it was a fleet of forty-five ships which had been detained for sixty days by bad weather. They were under the command of Sir Walter Manny, one of the most famous knights of his time. He had first come over to England in the suite of Queen Philippa as her *écuyer trenchant*, or 'carving cavalier,' and had already won distinction at Cadsand (p. 59), and under the walls of Cambrai in Edward's earliest French campaign. Though the newly arrived reinforcements were too feeble to enable the Countess to raise the siege or to take the field, their presence revived the drooping spirits of the defenders. She received Sir Walter with splendid hospitality in halls and chambers hung with tapestry; but the whole night long and the following day, from one huge catapult, advanced insultingly near the walls, the besiegers hurled great stones into the town and castle. So after dinner Sir Walter said 'he had a fancy to destroy this great engine, if any had the will to go with him.' Several of the guests took up the challenge, and putting on their armour, the party stole quietly out of one of the gates with a train of 300 archers, and making a dash upon the artillerymen, cut down and scattered them, and smashed the catapult to pieces. They then galloped in among the enemy's lines, and upset the tents—for frolic mingled largely with the fighting of those days—and running a tilt with all whom they met, rode back safe into the town. Then the Countess went down from the castle to welcome them 'gaily' ('à grand' chère'), 'kissing Manny and his companions one after the other two or three times, like a valiant dame.'

And now Charles and his allies, finding it hopeless to persist, drew off from the seige of Hennebon and in-

vested Auray, which they reduced by famine. Vannes was their next trophy, and there the French Marshal Lewis of Spain, who was far more of a sea captain than a general, embarked his troops, and sailed away for Quimperlé in 'Bretagne Bretonnante,' or western Brittany, where landing he ravaged the country and laded his ships with spoil. Sir W. Manny pursued by sea and land, attacked the marauders, forced them to disgorge their plunder, and chased them away in their ships, Lewis himself narrowly escaping capture. Robert of Artois was now on his way with an English fleet to Brittany. Lewis of Spain intercepted it near Guernsey, and a doubtful engagement took place, which was broken off by the coming of the night, during which a storm arose and scattered the fleets; but the English managed ere long to reach the Breton shore, and joined the Countess and Sir Walter in the recapture of Vannes. Within a few days, however, the French again laid siege to Vannes, and the ill-starred D'Artois received a wound which obliged him to abandon the campaign and retire to England, where he shortly afterwards ended his life. King Edward himself followed close upon D'Artois with another invading force from England, and dividing his army into three detachments, laid siege at once to Rennes, Vannes, and Nantes; but hearing that the Duke of Normandy was advancing to reinforce Charles of Blois, he concentrated and entrenched his forces under the walls of Vannes. All through the worst of a very severe winter, with soldiers mutinying, horses dying, and supplies running short, the two armies lay encamped within sight of one another; till at length, in January, two cardinals arrived from Clement VI., who had succeeded to the Papal throne, to endeavour to bring about a peace. A truce was agreed upon at

Indecisive sea-fight off Guernsey.

King Edward arrives in person.

A.D. 1343. Truce of Malestroit.

Malestroit, to last till Michaelmas. The Scots, the Flemings, the Hainaulters, and the two contending parties in Brittany were to be included in the truce, and the elder De Montfort was to be set at liberty.

The French King evaded the stipulation for the release of De Montfort; but two years later the prisoner managed to escape in disguise from the Louvre, visited and did homage to Edward in England, and rejoined his wife at Hennebon; where, however, he soon afterwards died, appointing the English King guardian of the rights of his son. Thus ended Edward's third inglorious and unprofitable French campaign. The convention of Malestroit was a truce only, not a peace: whether it should become such or not, was a question which Edward thought it politic to reserve for the decision of his Parliament.

That body assembled at Westminster in the spring of 1343. Though we may infer from a notice in the Parliamentary Rolls (ii. 127) that the division of Parliament into two Houses, 'Lords and Commons,' took place two years earlier, this session is remarkable as the first occasion in which that separation is clearly apparent. It formed no part of the original plan of Edward I., according to which clergy, barons, knights and burgesses, all deliberated, voted, and made grants, independently. The 'Grauntz'—that is, the prelates and barons, the latter about forty in number—held their sitting in the White Chamber, subsequently called the Court of Requests; the knights of the shires, and the burgesses representing the towns, sat together in the Painted Chamber. The members of the Commons at this time numbered about 250, and were paid for their attendance in Parliament by a tax levied on the places which they represented, the knights receiving four shillings a day, and the burgesses two shillings; for payment to the members of the Commons' Chamber was then the rule,

Parliament of 1343.

and was not, in fact, abolished till the eighteenth century. On this occasion the two 'Houses' each gave a separate opinion in favour of peace, but undertook to support the King loyally and liberally in maintaining his quarrel, if peace could not be had on fair terms. It was agreed, however, that commissioners to arrange the conditions o peace should lay their proposals before the Pope, under protest that they were submitted to him not as a dictator or judge, but as a common friend (extrajudicialiter et amicabiliter). This precaution was owing to the jealousy felt at this time in England of the Pope's aggressive and encroaching policy. During the whole of Edward III.'s reign the attitude of the nation at large, and of the prelates no less than of the temporal Peers, was that of watchful and determined resistance to Papal interference. This Westminster Parliament petitioned for the redress of a grievance to which Englishmen were constantly obliged to submit—namely, the occupation by non-resident foreigners—'provisors,' as they were called—of livings and other ecclesiastical offices in England under the nomination and appointment of the Pope. Edward, who had before complained personally to his Holiness of these abuses, now wrote still more urgently; but as letters containing secret orders from Avignon to the clergy were still constantly coming into England, he found it necessary to issue mandates a few months later forbidding any person to carry into England Bulls or documents from the Pope appointing to any ecclesiastical office beneath the dignity of a bishop. The disputes about these provisors were carried on all through Edward's reign, the first beginnings of the storm which, after gathering strength for two centuries, at length broke out, with only too destructive violence, in the great Reformation. As for the peace negociations, however, Edward wrote courteously to

Relations with the Papal See.

Clement VI., agreeing to the prolongation of the truce; and, difficult as it is to believe that he had any definite policy at all, it may be safely assumed that in his apparent readiness to negociate he wished either to put the French King in the wrong or to gain time for maturing his warlike preparations. Whatever may have been his ultimate designs upon the French crown, it appears certain that he had no intention of yielding up a tittle of his claim to the absolute sovereignty of Guienne, whereas Philip had determined that Edward should never hold a foot of land in France except as a vassal. No wonder, therefore, that the ambassadors who met before the Pope failed to arrive at any mutual agreement; no wonder that the English King, on the return of his commissioners, in complete uncertainty as to the future, waiting for the leading of circumstances, and constantly receiving intelligence of new aggressions in Guienne and threats of the invasion of England—should have continued to prepare for war by strengthening the defences of the country, and by acquiring fresh alliances and fresh supplies of arms, ships, and men, while all the time he kept alive the formal negociations for peace. In this way a year and a half was passed, and it was not till the Midsummer of 1345 that Edward struck the first blow.

In this interval, in the year 1343, Edward's friend, the Earl of Salisbury, was crowned King of the Isle of Man, and 'Edward of Woodstock,' created Prince of Wales. On the first day of the January following, King Edward proclaimed a Round Table, or great international tournament in honour of King Arthur, at Windsor, and shortly afterwards gave orders for the erection of a 'house called the Round Table'—the present Round Tower of Windsor Castle—in which the knights attending the jousts should banquet. He issued authority to the architect and the head bricklayer

A.D. 1344. Round Table at Windsor.

to impress as many artizans as they might require in certain counties to carry out the work, which cost him £100 a week, a large sum for those days; but Edward seems to have been now in no want of money, for about the same time we find a commission sent to Germany once more to redeem the 'great crown' from out of pawn. Among other preparations for war he resorted to the very doubtful expedient of forbidding bullion and the precious metals in any shape, from being carried out of the country. He also prohibited the export of horses above the value of sixty shillings; required all persons having forty acres of land to take up the military order of knighthood, and issued orders that no knight or man-at-arms should leave the country without his permission.

Of the friendship of the Flemings he had every reason to feel secure, but on the eve of the great effort which he was about to make he thought it prudent to confer with Van Arteveldt and the burgomasters, and ascertain their feelings towards him. Van Arteveldt had ruled his countrymen with a wisdom and sagacity which even his detractors admit, for nine years, but just three months before the visit of Edward a trade crisis had occurred, which ended in a bloody struggle at Ghent, in which 500 operatives were killed. The course which the *Ruwaert* took on this occasion in supporting the small towns in their resistance to the monopoly of the cities, had drawn upon him the enmity of the master manufacturers of Ghent, Bruges, and Ypres; while he was at the same time at issue with the party whose cause he had espoused, because they were ready to throw themselves into the arms of the Count of Flanders. At this juncture Edward arrived. The conference took place in the harbour of Sluys, where Edward received the burgomasters on board 'his great ship "Katherine."' He endeavoured to persuade them formally to depose

A.D. 1345.

their Count and to receive the Prince of Wales as Duke of Flanders. Van Arteveldt embraced this project warmly, and during the month which the burgomasters took to lay the question before the general assembly of the people at Ghent he visited the towns of Ypres and Bruges, and spared no exertions to induce the citizens to accede to King Edward's proposal. Meanwhile his enemies at Ghent, encouraged, as it is said, by the Duke of Brabant, who had rejected Edward's overtures, and wished to ally himself with the Count of Flanders instead, incited the populace against their Ruwaert; who, on his return to the capital, was basely and ungratefully murdered in his own city, by the people whom he had ruled so well and wisely. However, much or little as Edward may have felt the assassination of his friend, that event in no way interfered with his policy. He suffered his wrath to be appeased by a representation from the citizens of Ypres and Bruges that they had no share in the murder, which indeed they deeply regretted. The project of making the Prince of Wales Duke of Flanders is no more heard of; but Edward published an account of his visit, in which, without any allusion to Van Arteveldt's death, he reports that 'the Flemings were never firmer in fidelity to us.'

Van Arteveldt murdered.

A year elapsed after this conference before the King took the field in person; but already, early in the summer of 1345, the Earl of Derby, son and heir of the Earl of Lancaster, had sailed for Guienne. For the Gascon barons who attended the Round Table had represented to the King that his 'good country of Guienne and his good friends and his good city of Bordeaux were badly comforted and supported,' and besought him to send over a captain with an army capable of making head against the aggressions of the French, which, even in times of nominal truce, had never

Earl of Derby in Guienne.

wholly ceased. Edward had thus a just excuse for sending a strong force into the South of France at the same time that he was organising a second invasion of that country by way of Brittany, where he had a friend in the Countess of Montfort, whose still remaining territory afforded him a safe landing place and basis of operations on the west. The Earl of Northampton sailed at the head of this expedition about the same time that the Earl of Derby took the command in Guienne; but with the exception of a few unimportant captures he accomplished nothing worthy of record, till he was recalled to join the third army of invasion, commanded by the King in person.

Earl of Northampton in Brittany.

The movements of the Earl of Derby were more important. He landed at Bayonne with some 3,000 men, and marched to Bordeaux, where, having been reinforced by the troops of the province, he took the field against the French, who had entrenched themselves strongly at Bergerac on the Dordogne. At the suggestion of Sir Walter Manny, who accompanied this expedition, he made a sudden and desperate attack on the town and captured it almost by surprise. He then overran Perigord and the Agenois, scarcely encountering any serious opposition, and safely withdrew with his spoils into Bordeaux. Meanwhile the French had not been inactive. They did not indeed venture to meet the English in the open field, but they had put the country still spared by the invaders into a state of defence. Philip had entrusted the arming of Languedoc to his son, the Duke of Normandy, who succeeded so well in rousing the nobility and levying troops, that when the French King visited his son's headquarters at Angoulême in September, he found a large army massed there, observing the motions of the English from a safe distance, till the Earl of Derby withdrew into winter quarters. But as soon as they heard that he was

laid up in Bordeaux, the French, notwithstanding the lateness of the season, took the field in great force, and laid siege to Auberoche. The garrison, who were unprepared for defending the place against an attack conducted by an army of 10,000 men, armed with the most formidable engines of war, sent off a page to the Earl of Derby for help. The besiegers caught the poor boy and hurled him back from one of their catapults over the walls into the town. News did reach the Earl of the distress of the garrison, but it reached him so late that there was no time to collect such a body of troops as might enable him to raise the siege. He started, however, with Sir Walter Manny at the head of 300 lances and 600 archers, and, undismayed by the desperate odds against him, advanced under cover of a wood upon the enemy's camp, stole upon them while at supper, and dealt such terrible slaughter among the startled and unarmed host of the besiegers, that all who could were glad to save themselves by flight. After this daring and successful action the Earl overran the country, taking Angoulême and many other strong fortresses without experiencing a reverse, and again retired into winter quarters.

Siege of Auberoche. A.D. 1345.

In the spring, when the armies took the field anew, the Duke of Normandy found himself at the head of 100,000 men at Toulouse, and this time departing from his policy of inaction, laid siege to the fortresses which had lately been taken by the Earl of Derby. Angoulême was garrisoned by the English under John of Norwich, who, seeing that defence was hopeless and surrender inevitable, proposed to the Duke that, as the following day was the Feast of the Purification of the Virgin, a truce should be observed by both armies, neither molesting the other for four-and-twenty hours. The Duke agreed: and early on that 'Candlemas' morning he

called together his men, mounted them on strong horses, 'trussed up bag and baggage,' and marched out of the city in good order into the midst of the French camp. The Frenchmen flew to arms, but Sir John pleaded the Duke's pledged word that neither army should molest the other for that day. The Duke saw that he had been overreached, but allowed them to depart in safety; and indeed it was in reliance on his well-known honour that Sir John of Norwich made this venture, for the Duke had already gained the character for scrupulous veracity which he maintained so well when King of France; and to him was attributed the golden sentence that 'if faith and truth were banished from among the rest of mankind, they ought to be found in the mouths of kings and princes.' Upon the withdrawal of John of Norwich, Angoulême surrendered to the Duke, who then, about the beginning of May, sat down to the famous siege of Aiguillon, which will hereafter be described.

SECOND DECADE.—1337-1347.

CHAPTER III.

THE CAMPAIGNS OF CRECI AND NEVILLE'S CROSS, AND THE SIEGE OF CALAIS.

BUT now the time had come at which Edward III. was to make in person his long-projected descent upon France.

He took with him his son and heir, Edward of Woodstock, 'late of Queen's College in the University of Oxford.' For the prince was one of the first students of that since famous institution, which had been founded in 1340, (by the confessor of 'Queen' Philippa,) and tradition still points out the vaulted chamber in which he slept as a boy undergraduate before he exchanged the gown for the sword.

The King's original intention was to join the Earl of Derby in Gascony; but, apparently at the last moment, he was persuaded by Geoffrey d'Harcourt, a French refugee who had taken the place of D'Artois in Edward's counsels, to steer for Normandy instead. He landed the following day at Sainte Vaste, hard by Cape la Hogue. This sudden change of destination is enough to show what the subsequent incidents of the war abundantly proved, that Edward's plans, if he had any, for the campaign, were at this time vague and unsettled in the extreme, and that the splendid success which ultimately crowned it was due, not so much to far-seeing combinations on the part of the general as to his own good fortune, and to the indomitable valour of the soldiers whom he led.

Edward invades France in person.

The first happy accident of the campaign was the unaccountable absence of all preparation on the part of the French for a descent upon Normandy. The great army of Philip was massed in the South of France, too far distant to be recalled in time to arrest the advance of Edward before he had arrived within sight of Paris. With a force of 30,000 men he marched at his ease through an open and undefended country, ravaging and pillaging far and wide, burning the ships in the harbours, and collecting a vast quantity of plunder, which he sent home with his returning fleet to England. At Caen, a city of 20,000 inhabitants, and described in a contemporary letter, as 'larger than any town in England except London,' he met with some resistance. Upon storming the place he found in the archives a secret treaty which the Normans had themselves proposed, and entered into with the French, for the invasion of England at their own cost, in 1339, a discovery which so enraged him that he gave up the town to plunder. He would have abandoned the inhabitants to be massacred had not Geoffrey d'Har-

Capture of Caen.

court withheld him, saying, 'Dear Sire, restrain your courage, and be satisfied with what you have done; you have yet a long journey before you get to Calais.' It is worth while to place this remark on record, for though resting on somewhat doubtful authority, it points to the fact that the idea of getting possession of the great fortress and 'pirate haven' (p. 125-6) of Calais, so important to the King of England whose revenues depended mainly upon trade, was what, at any rate from this time forward, determined the course of the campaign. Edward would in all probability have marched directly for Calais, to effect a junction with his Flemish allies—who, to the number of 40,000 men, had entered the French territory on the north—had he not found it impossible to cross the Seine without first making a long détour to the eastward, the consequences of which will presently be seen.

Calais the object of the expedition.

He remained three days at Caen, and then continued his advance towards the Seine, taking black mail of the people of Louviers, 'one of the towns of Normandy where they made the greatest plenty of drapery, and which was large, rich, and trading;' and at length reached the river at Rouen, where he reckoned on being able to cross it by the great bridge. But the French having no army to oppose to Edward on his first arrival in the open field, had destroyed every bridge standing across the Seine between Rouen and Paris, with the intention of confining to the left or southern bank the English army, who were eager to march northwards and leave the river behind them. At this moment Edward's situation was indeed beginning to become most critical. Retreat by the way he came was impossible, for the country had been exhausted and the inhabitants exasperated by the ravages of his army; and, should he succeed in crossing the Seine higher up,

Edward's efforts to cross the Seine.

King Philip was watching the invader's movements with a host already twice as numerous as his own, to cut him off on his way towards Calais and the sea. For when it became evident that the steps which the French themselves had taken, in demolishing the bridges, would inevitably bring the English close up to the gates of Paris, the alarm became so great that thousands of volunteers had flocked to St. Denys, where Philip had taken up his quarters. The English host meantime advanced from Rouen, along the southern bank of the river, towards Paris, burning and destroying all the towns on their route, till they reached Poissy, within five leagues of the city. Here again they found the bridge broken down, but Edward was far too anxious for the extrication of his army from a position becoming hourly more hazardous to entertain the idea of marching upon the capital. Halting his main body at Poissy, he gave orders to repair the bridge with all speed, and sent out light troops to attack the faubourgs of Paris, reducing St. Germain, St. Cloud, and Bourg la Reine to ashes. The consternation in Paris was extreme, but during the five days taken up by the rebuilding of the bridge, King Edward abode in the Abbey of Poissy-les-Dames, and kept the feast of '*our Lady of Mid-August*' with great solemnity, sitting at table in robes of scarlet bordered with ermine. But the main body of Philip's army was a few miles off, at St. Denys, already a mighty host, and daily swelled by fresh accessions of strength. Thither came Count Louis of Flanders, Sir John of Hainault (who had now deserted from the English cause), the Duke of Lorraine, the King of Bohemia, and his son Charles, King of the Romans, ere long to be the Emperor. For, happily for King Philip, the quarrel between the Pope and the Emperor Lewis had just broken out afresh, and the Pope, after loading him with insults

Preparations of the French.

curses, and studied humiliations, which made him ridiculous in the eyes of the feudatories, had at last declared the Imperial throne vacant, and called on the Electors to nominate Charles of Bohemia Emperor in his stead. But Charles at this time got no further than the preliminary step of being chosen King of the Romans. The Diet of Spires declared his election void, and when he presented himself at the gates of Aachen (Aix la Chapelle) to be crowned Emperor, according to custom, in that city, he found them closed against him. Having therefore no longer any footing in Germany, he volunteered to come to help King Philip, with 500 knights and nobles in his train.

And now it almost seemed that the English army—still on the wrong side of the impassable Seine, and with the river Somme beyond it still to be crossed, before they could make good their retreat northwards—were about to fall an easy prey to their exasperated and exultant enemies; who had the command of the country between these two natural barriers, and were thus able to choose their own time and place for a battle. But in the meanwhile the repairs of the bridge at Poissy had been executed with an energy proportioned to the danger, and, as soon as it was declared passable, Edward broke up his camp, and crossing unmolested on the 16th of August found himself safe, so far, on the northern bank of the Seine. Scarcely had his vanguard, under Geoffrey D'Harcourt, passed the bridge than they found themselves face to face with a large contingent of armed men from Amiens, 'marching horse and foot and in grand array,' to join the French army at St. Denys. They assailed each other with mutual fury, but the English was victorious, and it is said that 1,200 of the enemy were slain in this chance encounter.

Arrived safely at Pontoise, Edward received a message

from the King of France, challenging him to a pitched battle in the plain of Vaugirard. He replied that the King of England would always be found ready, but that, being in his own dominions, he would allow no one to dictate to him the time and place of battle.

He then marched northward, pillaging and burning all before him; but it is remarkable, and highly characteristic of the times, that amidst all this cruelty and destruction the property of ecclesiastics was religiously spared. The abbey of Beauvais was indeed destroyed, but King Edward straightway seized the men who had set it on fire, and hanged twenty of them on the spot. At Airaines he halted for three days, during which Geoffrey d'Harcourt and Lord Warwick, with 3,000 men, were employed searching the banks of the Somme for a place at which the army might cross, either by bridge or ford. But the French had been beforehand with them, and they had to return to Edward with the news that, as far as they could ascertain, the river which lay athwart the line of their retreat northwards was impassable.

Edward marches upon the Somme.

Breaking up his camp with such haste, that when the French followed two hours after, they found 'meat on the spits, pasties in the ovens, and tables ready spread,' the English King pushed on to Oisemont, near the town of Abbeville which had in it a still unbroken bridge across the river, but was strongly garrisoned by the enemy. Here, however, fortune again favoured him. A 'varlet' named Gobin Agace, tempted by the promise of a rich reward, gave information of a tidal ford between Abbeville and the sea, where the river, he said, had at the ebb a depth of water barely up to the knees, and a bottom strong and hard, of white stone, whence it went by the name of Blanche Tâche.

It is not to be supposed that the French commanders

were unacquainted with the existence of this ford; but Philip thought that he had effectually provided against the possibility of the English effecting a passage there, by sending Godemar du Fay with 12,000 men to occupy the northern approach to the landing-place. However, the English army and this French detachment were in very different positions: the latter were standing on the defensive; the former, with a fierce enemy in overwhelming force pressing close upon their rear, had but this one chance for liberty and life—to fight their way across the river between two tides. They waited and waited the apparently interminable hours that the tide was slowly ebbing, in doubt whether the river would become fordable or the French vanguard be upon them, first. At length, however, the water fell low enough for fording, and the English men-at-arms plunged into the stream in the face of a shower of bolts from the crossbow-men on the further bank. But the Genoese marksmen were no match for the long-bow archers, and were soon driven from their ground by volleys of 'broad-cloth' English arrows; while the main body of King Edward's lances advanced under their cover, and, encountering the French cavalry in the middle of the stream, drove them back, some into deep water and some on the banks, and utterly routed them with a slaughter of 2,000 men. Hardly had the English rear-guard gained the northern bank, when the French army appeared on that which they had left. They even seized a few stragglers belonging to the retreating host, who had not kept pace with the rest. But the flood tide was mounting fast, and pursuit was impossible; so the rescued and the baffled army stood exchanging gestures of defiance across the river, till Philip turned his horse and led back his forces to Abbeville. He stayed there one day, and then advanced with an army daily swell-

English army crosses the Somme.

ing by reinforcements in further pursuit of his retreating foe.

But now King Edward, having crossed the Somme, stood in Ponthieu, his own lawful inheritance through the second wife of his grandfather, King Edward I., and was determined to retreat no further, but to stand at bay and fight. Edward resolves to fight.

Every day had been bringing him nearer to a junction with his allies, but we hear nothing more of the 40,000 Flemings who had crossed the frontier on the north three weeks before; still, notwithstanding the enormous disparity of force, Edward determined to hazard all upon the issue of a battle. Philip's delay of a day at Abbeville enabled the English King to rest and refresh his men, and deliberately choose an advantageous spot on which to receive the attack of the enemy. He selected a rising ground east of the wood, and south of the village, of Creci, between the Maie on the right and Wadicourt on the left. In the evening before the battle, having first taken the utmost care for the comfort of his soldiers during the night, he entertained his chief captains at a great banquet in his tent in the wood; and on their departure, entered his oratory and, doubtless devoutly, prayed—more devoutly than for safety or for life itself—that God would 'preserve his honour on the morrow.' At daybreak on an ever-memorable Saturday, August 26, 1346, the King and the Prince of Wales, who was then in his fifteenth year, 'heard mass and partook of the Sacrament, and the greater part of the army confessed themselves and received absolution.' Battle of Creci.

The plan of the engagement was that the army should be divided into three 'battles.' The King was to command the reserve, consisting of 700 men-at-arms and 2,000 archers, 'as a forlorn,' and take up his position on a hill in the rear, at a spot where a windmill then stood,

part of whose massive tower is still to be seen overlooking the plains. The second battalion, commanded by the Earls of Arundel and Northampton, consisted of 500 men-at-arms and 1,200 bowmen, and were posted on the left of the line, with the archers massed in front of them, and protected on their flank by the river Maie and a deep artificial ditch. The third detachment, consisting of 800 men-at-arms, 2,000 archers, and 1,000 Welshmen, under the Prince of Wales, the Earl of Warwick, and Sir John of Chandos, occupied the right; they stood a little in advance of the rest, nearly at the bottom of the slope, with the archers in front arranged 40 deep and 200 in breadth in the form of a '*herse*' or harrow. One historian tells us (see page 123) that in the intervals between these bodies were planted sundry very small bombards 'which, with fire, and a noise like God's thunder, threw little balls of iron to frighten the horses.' It was determined that the battle should be fought by the English knights and men-at-arms, as well as the infantry, on foot, and accordingly the horses were sent, with the baggage waggons, to a 'park' or entrenched enclosure, under the shelter of the wood, in the rear.

The skill of a general in those days was shown chiefly in the choice of the ground and the disposition of his forces. The battles were for the most part an aggregate of single hand-to-hand combats, in which victory depended more on the pluck and bottom of the men themselves than on the skilful handling of troops, and the masterly strategical combinations in which such captains as Napoleon delighted. The English King, or his marshals, did their work well before the battle of Creci.

When the dispositions had been made with all possible forethought and care, and 'each lord and captain stood under his banner and pennon' (the red dragon of Merlin floating over the Welsh contingent); 'the valorous young

King, mounted on a lusty white hobby, with a white wand in his hand, rode between his two marshals from rank to rank, and from one battalion to another, encouraging every man that day to defend and maintain his right and honour.' At daybreak he ordered his soldiers to 'eat at their ease and drink a cup, after which they sat down in their ranks and waited patiently for the French, with their long bows and helmets lying beside them on the warm grass.'

Philip passed the night at Abbeville, but as there was not accommodation in the town for his overgrown army, many of the soldiers had to pass the night in the fields, insufficiently provided with food. This was a bad preparation for a march of some six leagues to battle the following morning. As the army advanced, wearied and dispirited, and already in disorder, some French knights whom Philip had sent forward to reconnoitre the enemy, brought him word that they had seen the able disposition and the steady front of the English army, and begged him to keep his people where they were for the rest of the day, till all might rest and those behind come up: 'otherwise,' they said, 'your people will be tired and your enemies fresh; and be sure they will wait for you.' Two marshals were despatched, one to the front, the other to the rear, crying, 'Halt, banners, in the name of God and St. Denys;' but the command was misunderstood or disregarded, and the rear jealously pressed forward upon the van till all the lanes were choked with men, and discipline was at an end,—the French army became a disorganised multitude of wrangling soldiery, which King and captains endeavoured vainly by threats and persuasions to reduce to order, as they 'clashed their swords and shouted "Kill, kill," making sure of an easy prey.'

And now the English stood up and formed, and when

Philip saw them 'it stirred his blood, for he hated them,' and flinging wide the oriflamme, or great scarlet banner of France, which like the 'standard of the Prophet' among the Turks, was the sign of 'no quarter,' he furiously ordered his 15,000 crossbow-men to advance and dislodge them. But the Genoese marksmen were hungry, tired, and out of heart already, and just at this juncture came on a sudden tempest from the west, with thunder and lightning. The sky grew black; ravens, thought to be birds of fatal omen, flew screaming over the French army; the rain came down in torrents, drenching and chilling the weary soldiers and slackening the strings of their bows. It was, however, no more than a summer storm, and 'at vespers' the sun shone brightly forth, and the crossbow-men were persuaded to advance. But their bowstrings were swelled and stretched, and the 'level sun' shone full in their eyes, for they were advancing from the eastward. They set up a loud shout 'to frighten the English,' but the English never moved from their places; again they shouted, and the third time 'very loud and clear,' and let fly their arrows. At the best they were no match for the English archers, who now drew their bows dry and safe from their coverings, and taking one step in advance, poured in their home-drawn shafts so thick and fast that the Genoese fell back discomfited, pierced through their necks and hands with the arrows, and cutting the strings of their bows in their rage and despair. The Genoese were supported by a splendidly accoutred body of horsemen, the flower of the French cavalry, who 'formed a great hedge behind them,' under the command of the Count of Alençon, King Philip's brother. When the crossbow-men fell back they threw the cavalry into confusion, and Philip crying out fiercely, 'Slay me those runaway scoundrels;' and his brother, 'Down with them, and let me ride over their

bellies against the English!' the angry horsemen too readily obeyed, and cut them down by hundreds as they fell back; while the ceaseless storm of English arrows still poured in on this internecine struggle, and completed the slaughter of the unfortunate Genoese.

And now Sir John of Hainault gave counsel to the French King that he should retreat, and fight it out another day; but Philip was too much incensed to listen to any prudential advice, and spurred madly through the press of his own soldiers to join the Count of Alençon's division, which, almost uninjured under the protection of their armour, were fighting their way round through the disorganised masses of their own vanguard, to charge the Prince of Wales. At the same moment the Count of Flanders was struggling through to assail him on the other flank, and a strong body of German and Savoyard knights broke through the line of the archers in his front, and split the '*herse*' in two. The second battalion of the English, whose left flank was, as described, unassailable, immediately closed in on the right to support young Edward; but the struggle was long and doubtful, and Arundel and Northampton sent to the King to tell him how the battle was going, and to beg him to reinforce the Prince. 'Is my son killed?' said the King. 'No,' replied the messenger. 'Is he wounded?' 'No, Sire.' 'Then,' said he, 'tell those that sent you that he shall have no help from me. Let the boy *win his spurs*.' When his answer, long since passed into a proverb, was brought back the slackening fight again grew fierce and furious. The Prince now charged his assailants and drove them back again as they had come, between the two wings of the broken array of the English archers, and the Counts of Alençon and of Flanders and great numbers of the French knights and nobles fell. But young Edward himself was flung to the ground in the

mêlée, and his life barely saved by Richard de Beaumont, bearer of the great banner of Wales, which he flung over the fallen Prince, till rescued from his assailants. The Welshmen rushed under the bellies of the horses and stabbed them with their long knives, and slaughtered the heavily falling riders as they lay helpless in their armour on the ground, for no quarter was the order of the day on both sides.

About this time the blind old King John of Bohemia, the son of one Emperor and the father of another, asked of a knight who stood by how the battle was going. He was told that the Genoese had given way, that they were slaughtered by the French cavalry, and that his son, the King of the Romans, was bearing himself bravely in the thickest of a doubtful fight. 'Then,' said he, 'lords, you are my vassals, my friends, and my companions; I pray you and beg you that you will lead me so far that I may strike one blow with my sword.' So two knights came up, one on each side of him, and each knight took a rein of the King's bridle and fastened it to his own, and thus they rode into the battle. 'The King struck one blow with his sword, even three, even four, and fought right valiantly.' When on the following day they counted the slain, the King and his two knights were found stretched side by side in death, their bridles interlaced, with the rest of his guards lying close around them. Philip, beside himself with rage and grief, forcing his way at length through the struggling masses, joined desperately in the assault in which his brother had already fallen. His horse was killed and he himself twice wounded, but when the blood was stanched he remounted and returned into the mêlée. The battle was already lost. The sacred Oriflamme itself had been beaten down and barely rescued by a gallant French knight, who, while he kept assailants at bay with his sword, stripped the banner from the shaft

with his dagger, and rode away with it wound about his body. Sir John of Hainault meanwhile seized the bridle of the defeated King and carried him off almost by force, broken-hearted from the battle-field. That night he lay hid in the castle of La Broye, and the next day found refuge within the walls of Amiens.

The battle had begun 'at vespers,' and when Philip fled from Creci the autumn twilight was closing in, and though the battle raged far into the autumn night, no attempt was made to pursue the shattered remnants of the army. King Edward, ignorant of the completeness of his victory, ordered fires and torches to be kindled and kept burning, and forbad the men to quit their posts. His meeting with his son may easily be imagined. He clasped him in his arms before the whole army by the light of the blazing watchfires, and said, 'Fair son, God give you good perseverance; right royally have you behaved to-day, and proved yourself worthy of a crown.' Then the young Prince,—for filial respect was one of the first and best lessons of chivalry,—bowed reverently to the ground and 'gave the honour to the King his father.'

The dawn of Sunday was obscured by a dense fog, and a detachment of troops was sent forward to reconnoitre and find out whether the French were rallying. They came suddenly upon a large body of soldiers marching in ignorance of the event of Creci, to join the French army from Abbeville, whom they immediately attacked and routed with great slaughter. Another troop equally unprepared, under the Archbishop of Rouen and the Grand Prior of France, were massacred without resistance. Many stragglers too, who had passed the night in the hedges waiting for the daylight, were caught and slain; so that it is said the carnage of the day after the battle was greater than that of the battle itself, and the total number of the slain far exceeded that of the whole

of the English army. When they had counted up the dead, and ascertained by their surcoats the names and rank of the fallen, the conquerors could hardly believe the greatness of their victory. The bodies of twelve sovereign princes and 1,300 knights were found amongst the slain. The story is told, but on very doubtful authority, that the Prince of Wales, in honour of the most gallant and illustrious of the victims, took from the helmet of the King of Bohemia its plume of ostrich feathers, and adopted as his own the royal motto 'Ich dien,' which his successors have ever since borne.

No obstacle now lay between Edward and Calais, which we may assume to have been, at any rate since the sack of Caen, the chief object of the expedition; but he knew that before making it his own, he would have to encounter a vigorous and probably tedious resistance. So he determined, if the first assault failed, to take the city by blockade, and starve it out, 'though he should have to stay before it a dozen years.'

Siege of Calais.

Accordingly he built a town of huts round Calais, which he called 'Newtown the Bold,' and laid it out with a market, regular streets and shops, and all the necessary accommodation for an army, and hither were carried in vast stores of victuals and other necessaries, obtained by ravaging the country round and by shipment from England. The French, however, kept a strong fleet at sea, and constantly harassed the English transports, so that Edward had to write home to require ships to be fitted out to protect them in their way across the Channel. To carry out these objects effectually large sums of money were needed. The expenses of the army before Calais alone were enormous. The King found himself obliged to apply to the nation for a subsidy, and accordingly sent two envoys to England, who gave a full account in a Par-

liament assembled for the purpose, of the King's progress, of the victory of Creci, and of the siege of Calais, not forgetting to mention the discovery at Caen of the 'ordinance of Normandy' for the invasion of England 'and the destruction and annihilation of the English nation and language;' and prayed the King's faithful Parliament to grant him a sum of money to carry the expedition to a glorious termination by the capture of Calais. The liberal subsidy of two-fifteenths was granted with no hesitation as to the amount; but the faithful Commons, growing on each occasion of a supply more and more outspoken, took the opportunity of representing that their constitutional rights were invaded by the people 'being compelled to find "men-at-arms, hoblers, and archers" without consent of the Commons, but only by the order of the "Grauntz,"' or great men; and that the King 'should keep his promise that the defence of the sea should be at the expense of the Crown.' The former grievance was admitted, and an agreement made that the recent levies should not become a precedent; but with respect to the latter they were told that the 'old usage would be continued,' and that 'there was no better way of the King's defending the sea than that of his going abroad with his army for the defence of the land.

While Edward was pushing on the siege of Calais, the fears which he had entertained on leaving home, for the safety of his own kingdom, began to be realized. Shakespeare makes Henry V. say :— Invasion of England by the Scots.

> For you shall read that my great grandfather
> Never went with his forces into France,
> But that the Scot on his unfurnished kingdom
> Came pouring like the tide into a breach.

And now that, as they believed, 'England was bare of

fighting men,' and that none but 'cowardly clerks and mean mechanics' stood between them and a march to London, these restless and independent spirits determined not to throw away a chance of doing mischief. Just one week before the battle of Creci, Prince Lionel, whom Edward had appointed guardian of the realm, issued orders for the levy of an army in the north to defend England against the 'Scotch insurgents.' For young King David Bruce, at the instigation of the French King, had marched into Cumberland at the head of 30,000 cavalry, nine-tenths of which force were mounted, as usual, on rough ponies, but not the less well adapted for the purposes of a successful raid into an enemy's country. They stormed the 'Pyle of Liddel,' slaughtered the garrison, and sacking the abbey of Lanercost, 'advanced through the bishopric of Durham' as far as Bearpark, near Neville's Cross. Meanwhile, quite unknown to the Scots, the English army of eleven or twelve thousand men was encamped six miles off in the park of Bishop's Auckland. So complete was their ignorance of each other's neighbourhood that Sir William Douglas, the Knight of Liddesdale, going out in the evening to forage, found himself face to face with the whole English army, and lost 500 men fighting his way to his camp. Before he had reached it the English host had already drawn up in order of battle on an eminence near Neville's Cross, and there they were found by King David, who lost no time in attacking them. His army was in three divisions, one of them commanded by Robert the Steward, one by the Earl of Murray, and the centre by the King himself. The battle as usual was begun on the English side by the archers, by whom great numbers of the Scottish knights and cavalry, entangled in the hedges, were unhorsed and slain before the brunt of the battle.

Battle of Neville's Cross.

The whole English army then advanced with a huge crucifix carried in its front surrounded by embroidered pennons and banners. The wing of the Scotch army under the Earl of Murray, already disordered by the archers, was now broken and routed by successive charges of the English cavalry, and their leader slain. The Steward's division offered a very feeble resistance. King David, however, with the centre, made a gallant fight of it for three hours, surrounded by a ring of his nobles, but was at length brought down by an arrow which struck him in the face. A Northumbrian knight, named Coupland, flung himself from his horse upon the prostrate youth, and, though two of his teeth were dashed out by a blow from the King's dagger, made him his prisoner and carried him off to his castle.

The Scotch no longer resisted, and Robert the Steward, without an effort to rescue the King from his captors, collected the fugitives and marched them off the field.

Many Scottish earls and knights were among the slain. The knight of Liddesdale was taken prisoner along with the king, and both were conducted with great respect to the Tower of London. Coupland at first refused to give up his captive, but is said to have yielded him at last, upon the promise of an adequate reward, to the express order of Queen Philippa, who, one would willingly believe, if the statement rested on better authority, was present with the army on the occasion; and emulated the example of the heroic Frenchwoman who shortly before had taken up the sword and wielded it so successfully in her husband's cause. It is a certain and very singular fact that, if the Queen was not present, there would seem to have been no commander in chief to whose orders the other generals owed obedience, upon the English side. We hear of the Queen immediately

afterwards as sailing 'to rejoin' the King with the army before Calais, but Jehan le Bel, and several of the later 'recensions' of Froissart's often revised work, tell us that before the fight of Neville's Cross she retired to Newcastle.

This was indeed an age of warlike heroines. While the siege of Calais was proceeding, the war in Brittany was carried on with vigour and ability by Jeanne of Penthièvre; whose husband, Charles of Blois, had been taken prisoner at Roche Derein in the spring of the year by Edward's Lieutenant in Brittany, and lodged in the Tower of London.

Siege of Aiguillon.

It will be remembered that at the time Edward sailed from England and turned his course to La Hogue instead of Bordeaux, the formidable French army of the South having overrun the open country, sat down to beleaguer the great fortress of Aiguillon, which stood near the confluence of the Lot and the Garonne.

This was the most famous siege and defence of the war. From April till the end of August a series of assaults were at intervals directed against the fortress with the whole force of the French army, on one occasion for six successive days each of the four detachments of the army taking its turn for three hours at a time. Catapults for battering down the walls, and bridges over the rivers to the tongue of land on which Aiguillon stands, were again and again erected by the besiegers and demolished by the besieged, and Sir Walter Manny and his brave garrison had shown no sign of exhaustion, when news reached the Duke of Normandy that King Edward's invading army was within sight of the ramparts of Paris. Then at length the siege was raised; and the Duke marched northward to reinforce his father; while the Earl of Derby—now of Lancaster—refusing to treat with the French, took possession

of many important towns, among others of the rich and populous city of Poitiers. He then embarked for England and, recrossing the Channel, joined King Edward before Calais. Thither also repaired the gallant defender of Aiguillon, Sir W. Manny; but he, relying on a safe-conduct from the Duke of Normandy, rode with twenty companions through the heart of France. He was taken prisoner notwithstanding, and carried before the King, who basely threatened him with death. But the threat was not executed, for the Duke, true to his character, declared that he would never again bear arms against the English if his father incurred the deep disgrace of such treachery.

Sir W. Manny in danger.

After the defeat of Creci Philip seems to have thought that the campaign was at an end, for he straightway disbanded his own army and that which he had summoned from the South.

He made great efforts at this time to detach the Flemings from the English alliance, and so far succeeded that the burgomasters of the great towns invited the young Count, whose father had fallen at Creci, to come and rule over them, being then in his fifteenth year. But Edward sent envoys, who pointed out to the Flemings the paramount importance of keeping on good terms with the people which commanded the supply of the produce on which their industry depended, and persuaded them to acquiesce in a proposal for a marriage between the Count of Flanders and an English princess. Upon the Count's indignant refusal to be united to 'the daughter of the man who had killed his father,' (for his father fell at Creci) —his subjects seized him, and kept him under strict surveillance, till at last he gave them a promise that he would do as they required. King Edward and Queen Philippa were delighted at the prospect of this union, and went

Philip tries to gain over the Flemings,

with great pomp to meet their future son-in-law at Bergues, where a day was appointed for the marriage. But the Count was only watching his opportunity to escape, and finding it one day when out hawking, he set spurs to his horse, and outstripping pursuit, got safe within the French border, and threw himself into the arms of Philip. Upon this the Flemings flung off all friendly relations with the French King, raised an army estimated at 100,000 men, and ravaged the country up to the walls of St. Omer.

but fails.

Of the three possible means of approaching Calais, that on the east, by Gravelines, was effectually barred by the Flemings against a relieving French army. A second approach led through a marshy tract on the north-east, impassable except by a long and narrow causeway commanded by the bridge of Nieulay, which was defended, and defensible against a host,—by a small body of English under the Earl of Lancaster. The third means of access was by the Dunes extending along the sea to the south-west; this passage was fortified by deep ditches and a tower occupied by archers, and was commanded by the shot from the ships which were drawn up in shore, within range of the only possible line of march. Meanwhile a fleet of cruisers swept the Channel and barred the admission of supplies to the citizens, who began to suffer from famine. The siege had been turned into a mere blockade, for, though the ordinary means of attack by throwing missiles into the city were not abandoned, they seem to have been employed more with a view of increasing the distress of the besieged than of destroying the defences of the town. Among others small cannon were used, which threw metal bullets, and arrows winged with slips of thin brass-plate, and fitted with leather collars to the bore of the gun. These cannon can hardly have been

A.D. 1347. Siege of Calais resumed.

very formidable, for from three to four oz. was the average daily allowance of powder for each gun, and the whole stock of bullets for the siege was 204. The properties of gunpowder had been known to Michael Schwartz in Germany and to Roger Bacon in England half a century before this date; but it appears to have been first used for cannon at the beginning of the fourteenth century, in the Venetian wars. One historian only (Villani, see preface, page v.), and he an Italian, wishing to account for the defeat of the Genoese, lays any stress upon the fact of the employment of cannon at Creci. Doubtless it was little thought at the time that these clumsy curiosities were the precursors of an artillery which was destined to revolutionise warfare; and to abolish the whole external system of chivalry, by bringing down the iron-clad knight to a level with the unarmoured plebeian soldier.

Cannon employed.

At the commencement of the siege, the governor, John de Vienne, guessing Edward's intentions, had turned out of the gates everyone whom he judged useless for the defence. These, to the number of 1,700, drew near to the English camp, uncertain what fate awaited them; but the King received them within the lines, gave them a plentiful meal, and passed them safe into the country with a present of two pieces of silver each. Five hundred more of the useless mouths were expelled at a later period of the siege; but chivalry had its fits of obduracy as well as tender-heartedness, and this time the English lines were closed against them, and the whole multitude of men, women, and children were left to perish miserably of cold and hunger under the eyes of besiegers and besieged. The French ships made desperate exertions to throw provisions into the town, and at first with some success, but they were soon obliged to abandon the attempt. When the siege had

Non-combatants turned out.

lasted about ten months, two small vessels were seen escaping out of the harbour; one of them was caught, but, before surrendering, the captain was seen to throw something into the sea. It was found the next day on the sand at low water—an axe with a letter tied to it from John de Vienne to the French King, stating that the garrison was in dreadful straits; that they had already eaten the horses, dogs, and cats, and that they could find nothing more to eat unless they ate each other. This letter was brought to Edward, who, when he had read it, sent it on to its destination; and prayed King Philip that, if he valued his fair fame, he would send relief to his good people of Calais.

Philip marches to relieve Calais,

But at the time of receiving this melancholy despatch, Philip was already on his way at the head of an army, stated, with evident exaggeration, at 200,000 men, to the relief of the place. They marched with all their banners flying, and the Oriflamme waving at their head, and took up a position at Wissant on the sea. From thence they advanced by the way of the Dunes, and appeared on the Sandgatte Hills; but though they got possession of the watch tower, they were unable to approach within a mile of the English army. And now two cardinals who had accompanied the French army having endeavoured, and failed in their endeavours, to bring about a peace, the French King took a step which, odd as it may seem to us, —at that time probably created little surprise, as it was in strict accordance with the usages of chivalry. On July 31 he sent a knight named Eustache de Ribeaumont, and two envoys, who were admitted by the bridge of Nieulay to audience of King Edward, and delivered themselves thus:—'Sire, the King of France sends us before you, and would have you know that he is here, and posted on the Sandgatte Hill to fight you; but he cannot see or find any way

and challenges Edward.

of getting at you, though he has a great desire to raise the siege of his good city of Calais: he would be very glad if your council and his could meet and determine upon a place to fight; and this we are charged to request of you.' The above are the words of the challenge as given by Froissart, according to whom the English King replied that he 'had been there near a twelvemonth, was now on the point of taking Calais, and had not the smallest intention of complying with King Philip's request'; but a letter of Edward's own is extant in which he says that he accepted the challenge and appointed the day. However this may be, on the 2nd of August, to the amazement of all, the great French army suddenly broke up, and were seen marching away southward, leaving their camp in flames and Calais to its fate.

The following day the governor made a signal that he wished to treat, and when Sir Walter Manny drew near the wall to confer with him, offered to give up the city on condition that all within were permitted to depart unharmed. Sir Walter's orders were to demand a surrender at discretion, and this Sir John refused, saying that rather than accept such terms they would sell their lives as dearly as they could. Edward, who bore an ancient grudge against the inhabitants for their piracies, and was now exasperated by their obstinate resistance, turned a deaf ear at first to Sir Walter's intercessions; but at length consented that he would take the rest of the citizens to mercy, on condition that six of the chief burgesses should be given up to his vengeance, and, bare-headed and bare-footed, with halters round their necks, bring to him the keys of Calais. 'On them,' said Edward, savagely, 'I will do my will.'

The Governor offers to capitulate.

When these hard conditions were announced, a mournful silence fell upon the famishing multitude, summoned

by the ringing of the town bell, to hear their fate, in the market place, till Eustache St. Pierre, 'the richest burgess in the city,' stood forth and said, 'My friends, it would be a great pity and mischief to let such a people as this here die by famine or any other way, if a means can he found to save them, and it would be great alms and great grace in the sight of our Lord for anyone who could save them from such harm. I have myself so great hope of finding grace and pardon in the sight of our Lord, if I die to save this people, that I will be the first, and will yield myself willingly, in nothing but my shirt, with my head bare and the halter round my neck, to the mercy of the King of England.' Upon this, we are told, 'the women threw themselves at his feet weeping tenderly.' Then another and another of the burgesses stood forth, five more,—saying 'they were ready to go to death with him,' and so, ere long, the number was made up, and the dismal procession took its way to the English camp. De Vienne, who 'could not go afoot for his wounds,' rode along side of them, and the people followed, weeping bitterly, to the gate, which opened to deliver the six burgesses to Sir Walter Manny, and then closed again behind them. Ushered into the presence of the King, who was sitting under a crimson canopy of state, with his Queen at his side, and his court and staff standing round, they knelt down before him, and handing him the keys of the city, implored him to spare their lives. 'Certes,' says Jehan le Bel (see page v.), 'there was then in that place neither lord nor knight that wept not for pity.' But Edward, who 'hated the men of Calais for the damage they had done him on the sea in times past,' grinding his teeth with rage and silencing the expostulations of Sir Walter and the rest, ordered up the executioner. Then Queen Philippa, rising from the King's side, fell upon her knees, before the relentless conqueror, and

The six burgesses.

entreated him with tears to spare the burghers for her sake, and for the love of our Lady's son. He appeared for a long time inexorable, but at last he yielded to her prayers, and desired them to be delivered up to the pleasure of the Queen; who took them to her pavilion, clothed and fed them, and set them free with a gift of money for their immediate necessities.

There seems reason to believe that Edward, who, though easily roused to fury, was certainly not of a cruel or vindictive nature, never intended to stain his hands with the blood of these gallant citizens; and that the whole scene in the camp of vengeance giving way to intercession had been previously arranged. But even if this was so, it in no way detracts from the heroism of St. Pierre and his companions, who had completed their sacrifice and tasted all the bitterness of death. The courtly contemporary chronicler, whose sympathies seldom extend beyond the charmed circle of kings and knights and nobles, describes the above scenes in detail, with far more of pity than of admiration or enthusiasm; but to us, who look back into the distance, and see things in their real proportions and their true historical light, this golden deed of the self-surrender of six Calais tradesmen far outshines in glory all the knightly exploits of the time.

THIRD DECADE.

1347-1357.

CHAPTER I.

THE BLACK DEATH.

THE expenses of the siege of Calais were enormous, and led to another breach of faith on the part of the King. Notwithstanding his repeated promises to deal justly with his people, Prince Lionel, Regent of the kingdom in Edward's absence, was made to call a 'Council' —in which the Commons were unrepresented—at Westminster, and this Council negotiated a 'loan' (aprest) of 20,000 sacks of wool from the merchants, making it at the same time 'worth the merchants' while' to consent to the imposition of additional customs (a *maletolt*) on merchandise. In spite of an insistance on the right of self-taxation by the Parliament of 1349 and many subsequent Parliaments, this arbitrary practice lingered on, and a final stop was not put to it till 1362, when the Commons were strong enough not only to make, but to enforce, their own conditions.

Keepers of the Peace.

In the Parliament of 1347 it was enacted that in every county six persons, two barons, two knights and two lawyers, should be appointed 'Keepers of the Peace.' In the statute 36 Edward III., 14 years later, they are first called by their present name of 'Justices of the Peace,' and ordered to hold their sessions, as they now do, four times every year.

Edward's policy with respect to Calais.

On taking possession of Calais Edward adopted a course which reminds us of the wholesale deportations of ancient conquerors. He expelled all such of the inhabitants of the city as refused the oath of fealty to him; and repeopled Calais with Eng-

lishmen, whom he attracted thither by granting special immunities and privileges to the new citizens. He made it, some years later, the 'staple,' or general mart, for the sale of English produce, ordaining that 'no wools, skins, worsted, cheese, butter, lead, tin, coal, or grindstones should be exported from England except to Calais.' Though this policy, so obviously, as it would seem, injurious to the commercial interests of England, was shortly afterwards reversed, the position of Calais made it continue to be a place of considerable opulence and prosperity under English rule, for two hundred years and more. It was wrested from us in the reign of the first Queen Mary, who so deeply felt its loss that she used to say, 'When I am dead and opened, ye shall find Calais lying in my heart.'

Peace with France.

Although the cardinals had failed to bring about an accommodation between England and France before the capitulation of Calais, immediately after its fall they renewed their offers of mediation, in the name of Pope Clement VI., and now found both sovereigns willing to agree to an armistice for a few months which, at the repeated instances of the Holy See, and n spite of ceaseless efforts on the part of the King of France to goad his adversary into war,—was gradually prolonged for six years.

Edward's prosperity.

Edward saw himself at the commencement of the third decade of his reign at the height of earthly prosperity. His revenues were nearly doubled by the new impulse which he had given to trade and commerce, and by his clever manipulation of the duties on produce and manufactures. A series of military successes had appreciably added to the territory, and enormously enhanced the prestige, of England on the Continent, and the victory of Neville's Cross had placed the Scotch King as a hostage in his hands. He

found himself, still in the prime of life, the foremost power in Europe, the ruler of a loyal, united, and prosperous people; happy in his domestic relations, and with an heir renowned in arms though still a boy in years, whose character, ability, and dutifulness could give rise to no feelings but those of love and admiration in a father's heart. In the autumn of the year 1347, on the death of the Emperor Lewis of Bavaria, the Electors, unwilling that Charles of Bohemia, the Pope's nominee, should be forced upon them, besought the English King to suffer himself to be named as successor; and in their eagerness for his acceptance of this offer, announced to Germany that he was elected to the Imperial throne. But Edward, who at this crisis took his Parliament into confidence as usual, was determined by their unfavourable opinion to decline.

The Imperial crown offered to him.

The English people were full of exultation. 'It seemed,' says Walsingham, 'as if a new sun had arisen, on account of the abundance of peace, of the plenty and the glory of victories;' 'there was no woman who had not got garments, furs, featherbeds, and utensils from the spoils of Calais and other foreign cities,' and 'then began the English maidens to glorify themselves in the dresses of the matrons of Celtic Gaul.' There was such a passion for tournaments that they had to be forbidden to be held without the King's especial leave; but he himself appointed no less than nineteen in various places within six months, some of which lasted a fortnight or three weeks. It was like one long carnival, for at these tournaments, as well as at the 'King's plays,' and indeed on all public occasions, knights, citizens, men and women, and even the clergy, vied with each other in grotesque absurdity of dress. The King himself set the example of foppery and ex-

Rejoicings in England.

Extravagance of fashion.

travagance. He appeared once in 'a harness of white buckram inlaid with silver—namely, a tunic and shield, with the motto

> Hay, hay, the wythe swan!
> By Goddes soul I am thy man—'

and gave away, among other costumes, 'five hoods of long white cloth, worked with blue men dancing,' 'two white velvet harnesses worked with blue garters, and diapered throughout with wild men.' Women, 'not the best in the kingdom,' appeared at the tournaments, 'in divers and wonderful male apparel, with divided tunics, one part of one colour and one of another, with short caps and bands in the manner of cords wound round the head, or with mitres of enormous height decorated with streaming ribbons. . . . . and carried in pouches across their bodies knives called daggers, and thus they proceeded on chosen coursers or other well-groomed horses. . . . . and so expended and devastated their goods, and vexed their bodies with scurrilous wantonness, that the rumours of the people sounded everywhere, and thus they neither feared God nor blushed at the chaste voice of the people.'

The clergy let their hair hang down their shoulders curled and powdered, 'thinking scorn of tonsure, which is a mark of the Kingdom of Heaven.' They apparelled themselves 'more like soldiers than clerics, with an upper jump remarkably short and wide, long-hanging sleeves leaving the elbows uncovered, knives hanging at their sides to look like swords, shoes chequered with red and green exceedingly and variously pinked, ornamented cruppers to their saddles, and baubles like horns hanging down from the horses' necks.' These absurd details of 'fashion' are curious and not without interest, as showing the peculiar form which the universal propensity of mankind for self-embellishment assumed in England towards the latter end of the Middle Ages. The 'blue garters'

which figure more than once among the King's accounts were doubtless intended for the famous Order founded at this time. The popular account of its origin is that in the midst of a palace assembly the Countess of Salisbury, whom Edward much admired, dropped her garter; and this giving rise to broad jests among the courtiers, the King buckled it above his own knee, exclaiming, 'Honi soit qui mal y pense!' (evil be to him who thinks harm of that) and then and there resolved to establish the Order of the Garter. The earliest authority for this story is Polydore Virgil, who lived and wrote about a century and a half later. It may reasonably be supposed that such an accident, though not the origin of the institution itself, should have suggested to the King a suitable badge for the knightly Order which he had already resolved to create, in emulation of the Round Table of King Arthur.

Order of the Garter.

A greater contrast to all this can hardly be conceived than the state of France after the battle of Creci and the capture of Calais. The people of that country were reduced to such misery and subjected to such cruel violence and exaction, that they had neither leisure nor spirit to bethink themselves of the national calamities and humiliation. Organised bands of free-booters, some in the name of England and some in the name of France, attacked and pillaged the towns and fortresses which held for the opposite party, and laid waste the country through which they passed on their march. King Philip openly avowed and rewarded one audacious brigand who had made himself conspicuous by the injuries which he inflicted on the property of the English. There was, indeed, no declared war with France for eight years after the surrender of Calais; but the French King and his partisans, some openly and some without his apparent sanction, lost no opportunity

Condition of France.

of harassing the Continental possessions of King Edward. Calais itself was all but lost within two years of its capture, by a treacherous attempt on the part of De Chargny, governor of St. Omer, to bribe an Italian to whom Edward had entrusted the command of the garrison. The transaction coming to the knowledge of the English King, it was arranged that on December 31, 1349, the governor of Calais, on the payment of 20,000 crowns of gold, should admit De Chargny into the castle, which completely commanded the town. But at the time appointed King Edward, the Prince of Wales, and Sir Walter Manny, who had crossed the Channel secretly with 300 men-at-arms and 600 archers, were lying in wait; and when the twelve knights and the 100 men-at-arms sent by De Chargny were admitted with the money, the drawbridge rose behind them, and they found themselves at the mercy of the English, who rushed out from their ambush armed with hatchets and drawn swords and overpowered and secured them. Then Sir Walter Manny rode forth out of the town, with the King and the Prince of Wales as simple knights under his banner, to the bridge of Nieulay (page 122), beyond which De Chargny had not ventured to trust himself. The bridge having been secured in their rear, the Frenchmen had to fight for their liberties and lives, and they fought for them well. The King himself engaged with Sir Eustache de Ribeaumont, the same whom Philip had sent along with De Chargny to challenge the English to a pitched battle during the siege; but neither recognized the other till King Edward, 'raging like a wild boar,' and twice struck down on his knee by blows upon his helmet, at length overcame his adversary and took him prisoner in fair fight. 'All which,' says Froissart, 'was right pleasant to see, for, fighting well and valiantly, Messire Eustache de Ribeaumont surpassed them all.' But it was

A.D. 1349. Attempt to recover Calais.

not till the King received his unwilling guests at supper, and the Prince of Wales waited on them, that the Frenchmen discovered that they had been fighting with King Edward, who they thought was far away in England. Then the King, rising from his seat, with a passing rebuke to De Chargny for his unknightly treachery, took a chaplet of pearls from his own head, and placing it on De Ribeaumont's, begged him to wear it through the year for his sake, and to tell all fair ladies that it was given to the bravest of knights by England's King. He then dismissed them unconditionally. His vanity had been highly gratified at finding and overcoming a 'foeman worthy of his steel,' and he could afford to be magnanimous.

Those who tell the story of these times are tempted by the abundance of such materials to dwell too long upon wars and treaties, royal progresses and pageantries, and other incidents which,—though instructive and important in their way, and indispensable to a complete picture of the age,—are external to the real life of nations.

In the interval between the capture of Calais and this attempt to recover it, a visitation occurred which turned all the gay prosperity of England into mourning, and brought the French nation to the very brink of ruin.

A.D. 1348. The Black Death.

The outbreak of the Plague, or the 'Black Death,' as it was then called, has been left comparatively in the background by contemporary historians; but it is undoubtedly the central fact of the reign of Edward III. and of the fourteenth century; and, in the opinion of some writers, the most important economic fact in modern history. Among its consequences may be reckoned, as will be seen further on, an immense advance in the social condition of the working classes, owing to the scarcity of labour, and consequent increase in its value as a commodity;—the substitution of what we should call tenant-farming for

landlord occupation;—and a 'strike' of fifty years duration, which culminated in the rebellion of Wat Tyler in the following reign, and though then cruelly and treacherously put down, resulted at last in the emancipation of the English peasantry.

The local origin of the Plague is mysterious, and it has therefore, perhaps, been traced to Cathay, the land of mystery; but it is an ascertained fact that all the most devastating epidemics which have visited Europe have had their cradle in the far East. Its origin, Tidings of the Plague's ravages in Central Asia had reached England as far back as the year 1333; but the western peoples thought little of it as long as it was talked of only as one of the many scourges of imperfectly known and half-barbarous nations.

Constantinople was then, as now, the great frontier city between European civilisation and the far East, and through it flowed one of the three principal tides of Oriental traffic. Thither in 1347 the destroyer came, along with the caravans laden with Asiatic produce, and followed the westward course of commerce by easy stages along the shores and islands of the Mediterranean; sometimes pausing, sometimes doubling back, but always gaining ground; till it reached the utmost north-western boundary of Europe, not sparing Iceland, and even leaping over to Greenland,—where it probably extirpated the European colony (p. 49),—and returning by Norway and Sweden, through Russia, in 1351. and progress.

In Provence the chief cities were almost depopulated. At Avignon, where Pope Clement VI. held the most extravagant and dissolute court in Europe, three-fourths of the people died. The Pope shut himself up a close prisoner in his palace-fortress, and kept huge fires burning night and day.

In Cyprus, Sicily and Florence the Plague was felt with extraordinary severity. In the last place only it would seem that some efforts, though ineffectual, were made by the authorities to check the spread of the disease, among the victims of which was Petrarch's 'Laura.' During its ravages in that city a number of ladies and gentlemen withdrew together from all communication with the outer world; diverting themselves with music and dancing and other indoor entertainments, eating and drinking of the best, and never listening to or thinking about anything which might check their good spirits or disturb their serenity. Stories by which they are supposed to have amused each other have been preserved, or invented, in the 'Decameron' of Boccaccio, the effect of whose gay and festive pictures is heightened by contrast with the sombre background on which they are drawn.

The Black Death which made the tour of Europe in 1349-51 is undoubtedly the same disease as the Plague, now, or till quite lately, endemic on the shores of the Levant and in Egypt, having been, as it were, domesticated there by the lazy, filthy, and fatalistic habits of the people. Its specific causes are as much unknown as its original seat. The opinion of the time and some modern authorities agree in connecting its appearance with contemporary physical phenomena of a very remarkable kind; but it would seem as if these phenomena must have been of too limited and local a character to account for a pestilence which spread over a whole continent. Parching droughts, as it is said, were succeeded by convulsions of the earth and crackings of its surface, from which a fetid and poisonous vapour was projected into the atmosphere, the corruption of which was afterwards increased by malarious exhalations from swamps caused by incessant

Speculations as to its causes.

deluges of rain. To the panic-struck imagination of the people the Black Death seemed to be advancing to their destruction in the palpable form of a 'thick stinking mist.' That an alteration in the constitution of the air was a predisposing cause of the disease would seem probable from the fact that affections of the lungs and throat were among the earliest and most characteristic symptoms. But the immediate causes of an attack of the Plague were limited apparently to contract with an inhaling of the breath of a plague-stricken person; and there seems good reason to believe that a stringent application of the much-abused institution of quarantine would have effectually prevented its introduction into uninfected districts. The Black Death is specifically described as a disease 'in which the blood is poisoned and the system seeks to relieve itself by suppuration of the glands; and in which the tissues becoming disorganized, the blood is infiltrated into them, and dark blotches appear in the skin.'

Description of its nature.

In some rare and frightful cases of seizure the victim fell down and died without premonitory symptoms, but in the majority of instances the attack began with shiverings and bristling of the hair, succeeded by burning internal fever with a cold skin, and the rapid formation of boils, first in the axillæ and the groin, and afterwards in the internal organs. The appearance of these boils was the most characteristic of all the symptoms of the Black Death, but the advance of dissolution was often so rapid as to outstrip these forerunners, which were indeed due to a strong effort of nature to expel the matter of the disease from the blood.

The epidemic at Athens described by Thucydides and by Lucretius after him is wanting in some of the invariable notes of the true Plague, such as the appearance of

the boils and the liability to a second attack. There is, in fact, some reason to suspect that what those writers describe was no more than a violent outbreak of small-pox; not small-pox, however, as we know it now, but with many of the symptoms of scarlet fever. The tendency which Thucydides ascribes to the disease at Athens to extinguish and absorb into itself ordinary and casual disorders is common to all great and devastating epidemics. His description of the moral effects of the pestilence of his day tallies in a very remarkable manner with the accounts which have been handed down to us of the Plague of the fourteenth century. In both we read of the same recklessness, suspicion, cowardice, selfishness, and superstition, engendered by the fear of death. The Jews on the Continent—for that race had been expelled from England—were accused, as the Peloponnesians of old had been, of poisoning the wells, and numbers of them were massacred in consequence. The terror of the Plague was everywhere, inviting death; men's vital powers were so depressed by anticipation that they were already half dead before they were attacked: the throat parched, the pulse quickened, by nervous anxiety were taken for the fatal symptoms of seizure. And next to the fear of death was that of previous desertion. Men and women feared to look in each other's faces, lest they should be betrayed by the 'muddy glistening' of the eye; or detected in feeling with feverish finger for 'the little hard kernal no bigger than a pea, which moved with the touch under the skin of the armpit,' the sure precursor, as it was thought, of doom inevitable, irremediable, inexorable, and irrespective of persons, ages, or conditions of life. To imaginations morbid with terror pestilence indeed seemed to lurk in everything—in every morsel eaten, in every rag that fluttered in the wind. But who would be so foolhardy and irrational as to 'throw good life after bad' by nursing a

dying friend, when Black Death was in the breathing of his last sigh or the farewell pressure of his hand? So the nearest and dearest ties were dissolved, the calls of kindred and humanity neglected, and the sick were left to die and then be carted to the grave by hirelings. Numbers were driven by an unreasoning terror away from human habitations, and perished miserably in the solitude of the fields.

Among the most remarkable signs of the times was an outbreak of fanaticism which exhibited itself in the revival of the Order of the Flagellants, who first appeared in Hungary, but sent a colony into England when the Plague broke out in that country. Their mission was, as they gave it out, to expiate in their own persons the national sins which had called down the visible vengeance of God; and with that object, for thirty-three days, the number of the years of our Saviour's life on earth—they every morning stripped their bodies to the waist and publicly scourged their shoulders with knotted and weighted cords, till the blood ran down and marked the place of their penance by a red clotted spot in the dust of the street. They then assembled, clad in sack-cloth from the loins to the feet, with a red cross before and behind on their caps, and marched in slow procession through the towns chanting a penitential hymn, and frequently prostrating themselves on the ground with their hands extended in the shape of the cross, while the 'master' flogged their naked backs and shoulders as they lay. The Flagellants received but a cold welcome in practical England, but in Germany especially the people were driven half-mad by this and other religious excitements. In Strasbourg, where the Plague carried off 16,000 persons, its horrors were aggravated by the Papal interdict (page 66), which the pitiless Church did not even then remove; though a remonstrance was addressed to the

The Flagellants.

Pope praying that the poor innocent people should not be left to die, with all the agony of an unabsolved conscience, and without the last consolations of the Gospel.

In this country, however, by far the most memorable results of the Black Death were its social and economical effects. It made its appearance in Dorset-shire in the month of August of the fatal year 1348, but it was three months before it had reached London. Knyghton, who lived at the time, says that 'many villages and hamlets were desolated, without a house being let in them, all those who dwelt in them being dead.' The country places which the Plague attacked were soon silenced, for the pestilence did not even spare the brute creation ; and the carcases of sheep, horses, and oxen lay putrefying in the fields, untouched by dogs or birds of prey. But in London the streets and public places were, for a time at least, all alive and brisk with funerals—'alive with death.' First single biers, and then cartloads of corpses hurried along to the grave yards : 'no time was to be lost, for there would soon be too few left living to bury the dead.'

The Plague in England;

Any attempt to estimate the whole population of London before the Black Death would be no better than a guess, but when the poll-tax was levied thirty years after, the census gave only 35,000 inhabitants. Now, Stowe tells us that he had himself seen an inscription on a stone cross standing in the graveyard of the Carthusian monks, formerly the 'Spittle Croft,' 'outside west Smithfield barres,' stating that 50,000 bodies of the dead were buried therein and in the adjoining crypt. But it was not till the London graveyards were *already full* that 'Sir W. Manny purchased the Spittle Croft from the master and brethren of St. Bartholomew Spittle to bury the dead of the plague.'

The population of Norwich was reduced to the verge of extinction. Nothing can be more arbitrary or unsafe

than the attempt to get at the truth of history by winnowing recorded facts with the sieve of probability; and, making allowance for some exaggerations, we may accept the substantial truth of the statement of a contemporary record preserved in the Norwich Guildhall, that '57,374 persons, besides religious and beggars,' died in that city of the Plague. It is difficult to believe that the Norwich of the fourteenth century, though undoubtedly the second town in England and the chief seat of its most important industry, could have contained a population largely in excess of the above number. At Yarmouth 7,000 died out of 10,000. In Bristol 'the living were scarce able to bury the dead, and the grass grew several inches high in Broad Street and High Street.' The upper classes suffered as severely as the poor. In the Abbey of Croxton in Lincolnshire all died of the Plague except the Abbot and Prior. Parliaments could not meet; no courts of justice were opened. The Princess Joan of England, while on her way to meet her affianced husband, the heir of the kingdom of Castile, was struck down by it at Bordeaux. The Scotch were for many months exempt, and 'by the foul dethe of the English' became a popular oath north of the Tweed. They even assembled an army of marauders to take advantage of the helpless condition of their neighbours below the border, when suddenly the Black Death appeared in their camp in the forest of Selkirk and smote down 5,000 men before they could disband their army, the scattered remains of which, returning homewards, carried the pestilence with them into the remotest parts of Scotland.

at Yarmouth and Bristol;

in Scotland.

The western coasts of England, where now swarm the gigantic hives of our most important industries, were then thinly populated, and the south-western districts—Cornwall, Devon, and parts of

Number of the victims

Somersetshire—were almost without inhabitants. The great Abbey of Glastonbury stood on an island, the famous Isle of Avelon, in the midst of an impassable swamp, and the few villages which existed were built on insular or peninsular eminences. The population of England and Wales in the early part of the fourteenth century hardly, if at all, outnumbered that of the London of to-day. Out of this total, it is said on contemporary authority—and the statement is confirmed by modern research—no less than one-half perished by the Black Death in 1348 and 1349. The immediate consequence was an enormous increase in the value of labour, and a corresponding depreciation in the value of land. In the winter which followed the Plague, 'flocks and herds wandered about the fields and corn without any that could drive them.' Landlords excused their tenants' rents for one, two, or three years, lest they should desert their holdings and leave them uncultivated on their owner's hands. Wages rose so high as to swallow up the farmer's profit, and it frequently became a question whether it would be more ruinous to leave the crops ungathered or to comply with the exorbitant demands of the labourers. At last, in June 1349, Parliament not yet having been able to meet, the King issued this proclamation, addressed to the sheriffs of the several counties :—'Seeing that a great part of the people, and principally of labourers and servants, is dead of the plague, and that some, seeing the necessity of masters and the scarcity of servants, will not work unless they receive exorbitant wages, and others choosing rather to beg in idleness than to earn their bread by labour . . . . we have ordained, by the advice of our prelates and nobles, and other skilled persons, that every able-bodied man and woman of our kingdom, bond or free, under sixty years of age, not living by trading, or having of his or her own wherewith-

Proclamation fixing amount of wages.

all to live . . . . shall, if so required, serve another for the same wages as were the custom in the twentieth year of our reign,' &c. . . . . 'and seeing that many "sturdy beggars" (validi mendicantes), as long as they can live by begging and charity, refuse to labour . . . . no one under pain of imprisonment, shall presume to nourish them in their idleness.' The King and his Council had still to learn that legislative enactments are powerless to control the operation of economic laws, and that wages must in the long run find their own level, in spite of menaces on the part of employers or combinations on the part of the employed. When Parliament met, the year but one following, their first effort was to put down the 'strike,' upon which, it is hardly necessary to say, the proclamation had produced no effect. Complaints were made that the labourers were demanding, and in many cases receiving, 'double or treble what they were wont;' and an attempt was made in the famous 'Statute of Labourers' (25 Edward III., c. 2.) to fix by Act of Parliament a scale of wages, adherence to which on the part of masters and men was to be enforced under penalty of the stocks, which were to be forthwith set up in every town 'betwixt this and the Feast of Pentecost.' Penalties were also imposed upon all such as should flee from one district to another to evade the statute. Six years later, after a recurrence of the Plague, we hear in Parliamentary petitions of 'alliances and congregations' of masons and carpenters, 'and oaths betwixt them made,' and complaints of fugitive labourers withdrawing themselves from due service. The fact was that labourers constantly escaped from one county to another, and from country to town, in the hope of getting better wages; and at last, in 1361, Parliament, undeterred by former experiences of failure, were guilty of the folly and atrocity

Statute of Labourers.

of passing a downright 'fugitive slave law,' ordaining that a labourer, when caught escaping, should be imprisoned till he had 'made gree' to the party from whose service he fled, and nevertheless, 'in token of falsity, should be burned in the forehead with an iron formed and made to the letter F.' Again in 1368, and again in the last year of Edward III.'s reign, attempts were made to enforce the Statutes of Labourers, showing how imperfectly they were obeyed, and how vain was the endeavour to 'pass laws to the effect that a man should not have a fair day's wages for a fair day's work.' The only wonder is that, considering the vast area over which this Parliamentary tyranny was felt, an open rebellion was so long delayed. The poll-tax, 'granted' in the early part of 1377, but not, apparently, enforced, or severely felt till Richard II.'s reign, was but the spark which fired the train. Wat Tyler's insurrection, indeed, was sternly repressed; the charters of manumission granted by the King were treacherously withdrawn, and hundreds of the insurgents executed; but the populace had had everything their own way for a week; and, under the dread of a servile war, the abolition of compulsory service and all their other demands were tacitly but surely accorded. Thus within fifty years of the visitation of the Black Death serfdom and villainage were practically abolished in England, and the labourer, released from his bondage to the land, was free to carry his thews and sinews to the best market.

A.D. 1349.

As for the owners of the soil, they were compelled to abandon the system, hitherto almost universal, of farming their own lands; and, as the tenants to whom they had to let them were not possessed of sufficient capital to stock and cultivate the large estates hitherto occupied by the bailiff of the lord of the manor, it became necessary at first for them to hire

Arable land converted into pasture.

the whole or the greater part of the stock upon the farms at a fixed rent, and for the landlord to turn large quantities of arable into pasture land. This, however, was only a temporary expedient, and before very long a system of tenant farming, such as we now see, had become general. But by this time it had been found out that it was more profitable to 'grow' wool than corn, and vast tracts of land formerly cultivated had accordingly been converted into pasture. Villages had been demolished, and small tenants turned adrift from their holdings, and numbers of agriculturists everywhere deprived of employment, 'one shepherd and his dog' now doing the 'work of fifty labourers.' And so it came to pass that the emancipation of the serfs did not end in England, as in other feudal countries, in a minute subdivision of farms and an all but universal system of peasant proprietorship.

The population was not long in recovering its natural level. It is recorded that after the Black Death there was a remarkable increase of fecundity, and double and triple births were not uncommon; but we may well smile at the statement, gravely made by contemporary authorities, that mankind from this time forward suffered a permanent diminution in the number of teeth possessed by their race before the Great Plague! Recovery of the population.

Besides the Statute of Labourers, many other important enactments were passed in the course of the decade made sadly memorable by the visitation of the Black Death. One of these, 'the Statute of Treasons,' passed in a famous legislative year (25th Edward III.), is still beneficially felt among us, and may fairly be called one of the bulwarks of English liberty. Up to this time 'treason' had been so loosely defined that it was within the power of the judges to bring within its penalties, as 'constructive treasons,' acts which really A.D. 1352. Statute of Treasons.

amounted to no more than felony or trespass. Thus those who 'appropriated free warren,' or 'unlawfully took venison, fish, or other goods,' were frequently convicted of treason and condemned to death without benefit of clergy; the object of the judge in giving this 'construction' being that, whereas in the case of minor misdemeanours the lands of the criminal were forfeit to the lord of the fee, in conviction for high treason the estates were for ever lost to the lord and confiscated to the Crown. In answer to the repeated petitions of the Commons, treason was minutely defined by the famous statute of this year, and 'from the time of its enactment to the present day that definition has always formed the kernel of the law on high treason.' The same Parliament passed the Statutes of 'Purveyors' and of 'Provisors,' to both of which allusion has already been made, the former being intended as a check upon the exactions of the officers whose business it was to procure necessaries for the King's household; the latter upon the Pope's abuse of his power of appointing to benefices in England, which was a frequent subject of legislation in later years of the reign. The Statute of Provisors passed in this Parliament set forth that, 'whereas the Holy Church of England was founded in the estate of prelacy, to inform the people of the law of God, and to do hospitalities, alms, and other works of charity, and certain possessions were assigned to sustain the said charge . . . . the Pope of Rome, accroaching to himself the seignories of such possessions, doth give the same to aliens who did never dwell in England—. . . the said oppressions from henceforth shall not be suffered;' and as for the 'provisors' themselves, for so the persons 'practising this new device' were called, 'they should become liable to imprisonment.'

Statutes of Purveyors and Provisors.

Another abuse had come to such a pitch as to call for

the interference of Parliament. It was found that certain attorneys and barristers ('gentz de ley') had got themselves returned as knights of the shire chiefly with the object of promoting the private interests of their professional clients by introducing them into Parliamentary petitions. It was therefore ordained that no *practising* lawyer should be returned as member for the shire. All lawyers, however, were not expressly excluded *as such*, which was actually the case in the 'Parliamentum Indoctum' of the fifth year of Henry IV.'s reign.

Practising lawyers excluded from Parliament.

The rest of the enactments passed in these ten years were of a more questionable character, all involving more or less of interference with the freedom of trade. King, Lords, and Commons, equally ignorant of the first rudiments of economic science, seem to have believed that in matters of this kind *that* government governed best which governed most. Penalties were imposed upon '*regrators and forestallers*,' who were banished out of the towns they lived in, and were made liable to the 'stretch-neck' or pillory. These hard names were applied to persons who purchased wholesale, and made their profit by selling again to the retail dealers. A statute passed in the 27th Edward III. provided that 'no English merchant . . . . shall go into Gascoin, there to abide, to make bargain on buying of wines before the time of the vintage—that is to say, before the common passage be made to seek wines there, and that no merchant go toward such wines to forestall them before they come to the staple or port.' In the same year was enacted the Statute of the Staple, 'which provided that the staples' (or privileged markets, where, and where only, certain goods could be sold) 'should be held at specified places within the realm and not elsewhere;' and minute regulations were adopted as to the mode of carrying on

Interference with trade.

trade in the staples, and the limit of rent to be charged for houses in those towns. The great staple productions of the kingdom were wool, leather, lead and tin, and, under the Statute in question, these articles could be dealt in for exportation by none but a close corporation called the 'Merchants of the Staple.' Four years later, the 'stock-fish of Boston,' the 'salmon of Berwick and the fish of Bristol,' and the herrings round the coast became the subjects of legislation. No herring was to be 'bought or sold in the sea, till the fishers come into the haven with their herrings and that the cable of the ship be down to land;' and a little later it was made a subject of complaint in the preamble of a statute that 'many merchants do bargain for herring, and every one of them by malice and envy increaseth upon other; and if one proffer 40s. another will proffer 10s. more . . . . and so every one surmounteth the other in the bargain, and such proffers extend to more than the price of the herring upon which the fishers proffered to sell it at the beginning.' Trade of any kind was absolutely forbidden with Scotland. With the Irish traffic was not prohibited, but all intermarriage and approximation of the English and Irish races was jealously interdicted. The statute of 31st Edward III. runs thus:—'Whereas by marriages and divers other ties and the nursing of infant children among the English dwelling in the Marches and the Irish, infinite destructions and other evils have happened hitherto, we will and command that such marriages to be contracted between English and Irish, and other private ties and nursing of infants, shall from henceforth cease, and be altogether done away.' Thus early did English legislation begin to sow the seed of the 'wind' whose crop is the 'whirlwind' in the soil of this unfortunate island.

CHAPTER II.

FROM THE OCCUPATION OF CALAIS TO THE BATTLE OF POITIERS.

THE events which took place on the Continent during this period—the indecisive battles, the endless repetition of negociations for peace and preparations for war—may be dismissed as of minor importance, till we come to the expedition of the Prince of Wales ending in the victory of Poitiers, which laid France prostrate at the feet of the invador, and sent her king a prisoner to London.

It is, however, impossible to omit all mention of the famous sea-fight of 'L'Espagnols sur mer,' in which the naval pride of Spain was first humbled by an English fleet, and which vindicated for Edward III. his proudest and best deserved title of 'King of the Sea.' The splendid land victories associated with the memory of his reign are properly the victories of the Prince of Wales, but here, as before in the naval engagement off Sluys, it was the valour and prowess of the King himself which won the day.

A.D. 1350. Battle of L'Espagnols sur mer.

It is difficult to account for an invasion of England by the Spaniards at this time; but we may reasonably suppose, in the absence of any alleged grounds for hostility between England and Spain, that it was at least concerted with the French sovereign. 'Charles of Spain,' who commanded the Spanish fleet, was the younger brother of 'Lewis of Spain,' Marshal of France, both belonging to that dynasty of La Cerda which ought, by

right of primogeniture, to have been occupying the throne of Castile. For the famous Alfonso X., the last undisputed sovereign, had left two sons, the elder, called, from an unenviable peculiarity of physical structure, 'Ferdinand de la Cerda' (or 'Ferdinand with the Bristle'), and the younger, Sancho, who usurped the throne, and was great-grandfather of Pedro the Cruel, the reigning king. But Ferdinand, the deprived *Infanta* of Castile, had married Blanche, sister of Philip the Fair, and thus the branch of La Cerda were near kinsmen of the royal house of France. It is important to keep these relationships in mind, partly as explaining the present conduct of Charles of Spain, and partly as bearing upon other events hereafter to be described.

The battle was fought out at sea, the English having weighed from Sandwich, the Spaniards from the harbour of Sluys. While the fleets were advancing across the Channel to meet each other, King Edward, who commanded in person, sat in the bow of the 'Cogge Thomas,' 'in a black velvet jacket and a beaver hat which became him well,' and passed the time away joyously, listening to his minstrels' music, and the songs which John of Chandos had brought home from Germany,—but ever and anon turning up his eye to the look-out on the mast-head, to know if the enemy was yet in sight. At last the man on the watch shouted, 'I see a ship, and she looks like a Spaniard!' Then again, 'I see two, three, four of them!' and again, 'God help me! I see so many that I cannot count them!' At the first onset the 'Cogge Thomas' was struck so hard amidships by a huge Spanish 'nief' that her mainmast went by the board and she began to take in water. They thought she was sinking, so they grappled her fast to another great Spanish ship, and the King and the English knights and nobles—for it was by them that this battle was fought and won—swarmed up

on to the decks of the tall Spaniard, beat back her crew with swords and hatchets, and threw every soldier into the sea. Then, manning her with English seamen, and casting off their own sinking ship, they bore down in their prize upon the remaining Spaniards, some twenty of which were ultimately boarded or sent to the bottom, not a single sailor in a captured ship being 'taken to mercy.' The Prince of Wales too grappled a Spanish nief of immense size, and carried her after a furious fight just in time to see his own ship go down. Another English vessel got disabled, and entangled with a Spaniard, which, seeing her helpless condition, made sail and was carrying her off to sea. But a 'varlet' named Hannekin climbed up the side and leaped on the deck of the nief in the middle of her crew, and before they could stop him, cut the halliards of the mainsail; which coming down with a run upon the deck, the English boarded the Spaniard in the confusion, threw her crew overboard, and steered her back as an English ship, into the battle.

A week before this engagement took place, King Philip of France died, and was succeeded by his son John Duke of Normandy, but the conditions of the international quarrel were in no way affected by the change of sovereign. For four or five years, however, there was a cessation of overt hostilities. The English people generally were getting heartily tired of the war, but the King and his barons were getting equally tired of inaction, and after various, and probably half-hearted endeavours for peace, constantly stultified by mutual aggressions, in the year 1355 a second tripartite expedition was planned by England against France. One army, under the Prince of Wales, was to land at Bordeaux; a second to reinforce the Countess of Montfort in a renewed struggle with Charles of Blois, who had at length ransomed himself from his

A.D. 1355. Triple invasion of France.

captivity in the Tower; and a third, under the King in person, was to make a descent upon Normandy by way of Cherbourg. For Edward had got a new ally and supporter in that quarter—though he soon proved a broken reed—in the person of the very man who, had the English King's view of the rights of the succession been established, ought to have been on the throne of France. Charles the Bad, King of Navarre, was now in his twenty-third year, and had succeeded to the royal title on the death of his mother, the daughter of King Louis X. of France, in 1345. His right to the French crown was clearly better than that of Edward III., for whereas Edward claimed it as eldest grandson of Philip IV., Charles of Navarre stood in that relationship to a more recent sovereign. He was also, from his father, King Consort of Navarre, the inheritor of the earldom of Evreux in Normandy, and as such, a feudatory of the French crown. It was natural, under all the circumstances, that the son of Philip of Valois should wish to be on friendly terms with this powerful vassal, and King John accordingly invited him to his court and affianced him to his daughter. But Charles seems to have had just cause of complaint against his royal father-in-law, who, amongst other injuries, had withheld from him his wife's stipulated dower; and had taken advantage of certain complications which had arisen, to bestow two French counties, the ancient appanage of the Navarrese crown, on his favourite Charles de la Cerda, whom he made Constable of France in 1350. Shortly before the time at which we have now arrived, Charles of Navarre had treacherously assassinated his rival Charles of Spain, and fled across the French frontier to Avignon; where he met and entered into correspondence with Lancaster 'of the Wryneck,' then on a mission from Edward to Pope Clement VI., and

Edward makes friends with the King of Navarre.

elevated since we last heard of him to a dukedom—the second created in England since the Norman Conquest. John had, in the absence of the King of Navarre, invaded Normandy and seized upon several of the fortresses belonging to his earldom; so Charles, in revenge, agreed with King Edward to give him possession of Cherbourg and other strong places in Normandy, which would enable him to land troops unmolested, and give him a safe approach to within a few leagues of Paris. He also promised to support the English King with a fleet manned with his own subjects from Spain. This promise he kept, and landing at Cherbourg awaited the arrival of the expedition from England. But the fleet had been driven back by storms, and in the meantime Charles, whose patience was soon exhausted, had suffered himself to be reconciled to the King of France, and had entered into alliance with him. Edward hearing that his new confederate had already deserted him, and that John was getting an army together, determined to invade France by way of Calais, and landing there, laid waste Picardy and Artois. John advanced to meet him, but, after mutual challenges, as usual, more or less courteously declined, the two armies withdrew; and Edward returned to England to repel a new inroad of the Scotch; an inroad so fiercely avenged in the opening of the following year by the havoc and destruction of the Lothians, that this fatal February was talked of for long years after as the 'Burnt Candlemas.' When news was brought to Edward at Calais that the town of Berwick was in danger of falling into the hands of the Scots, he swore an oath that he would sleep no more than one night in any town before he arrived there to raise the siege. This oath he certainly did not keep, for he took time on his way to hold a Parliament in London and fortify himself by a larger subsidy than had

A.D. 1356. Burnt Candlemas.

ever before been granted him—namely, 5os. a sack on exported wool; the quantity of wool at this time annually sent out of the country averaging no less than 100,000 sacks. He had also to collect an army, which consisted of between twenty and thirty thousand men, for this time Edward was determined on the final and complete subjugation of Scotland. King David Bruce was still a prisoner in his hands, owing to the failure of negociations for his ransom which had been going on for ten years since the battle of Neville's Cross. Edward's 'dear cousin Edward Balliol, King of Scotland,' whose fortunes had steadily declined since the time of his audacious snatch at the crown, was now induced finally to surrender any rights he might be supposed to possess, by the form of picking up Scottish earth and stones, and handing them to the English King; in consideration of a round sum of money down, and a pension of £2,000 a year to be paid quarterly. He lived for seven years longer as a private gentleman in Yorkshire, and the respect with which the ex-sovereign was regarded may be judged of by the following extract from a royal proclamation:—'Know that whereas our dear cousin Edward Balliol, King of Scotland, at various times hunted and took sixteen stags, six hinds, eight staggards, three fawns, and six roedeer in the park and fished in the ponds . . . . took two pike of three and a half feet long, three of three feet, twenty of which were some two and a half feet long, and also 109 perch, roach, tench, and skelys, and six breams and bremettes,—we, listening to the supplication of the said Edward, have pardoned him.'

Resignation of Balliol.

The English relieved Berwick, but at Edinburgh their progress was arrested by want of provisions, the fleet which ought to have met them at Leith being driven back by a storm; and there was nothing for it but an ignominious and indeed disastrous retreat,

Invasion of Scotland.

for the Scots swarmed in every thicket they passed, and hovered on their rear, cutting off the stragglers and wounded as they fell behind. Early the following year (1357) negotiations for the ransom of David were renewed, and at its close he was at last released, the Scotch stipulating to pay a sum of 100,000 marks in twenty half-yearly instalments, and to keep the peace till the money was all paid. Twenty of the heirs of the principal Scotch families were given and accepted as hostages, and in default of payment, David was to surrender himself again to captivity.

Before King Edward, abandoning his share in the triple invasion of France, hastened off to the relief of Berwick, the Prince of Wales had already landed at Bordeaux.

Though in his own account of his campaigns, he speaks of having been disappointed in his expectations of effecting a junction with the Duke of Lancaster, who, it will be remembered, was sent into Brittany to fight for the De Montforts; it is difficult to believe that there was any concerted plan of action among the three divisions of the invading army, the most formidable which had yet left the English shores. The first campaign of the Prince, that of the autumn of 1355—began and ended in a successful but inglorious maurading raid upon the neighbours of the Gascon lords who planned it, 'a people good and simple, who did not know what war was.' They shunned the fortresses and plundered the undefended villages and country from the English border to the Mediterranean shore, and returned home laden with spoil wrung from unoffending and defenceless peasants and townsfolk. His second campaign will be described in the next chapter. It was of a similar character, but so rashly planned and improvidently conducted that, like Edward's retreat ten years before, it

First Campaign of the Prince of Wales.

must have ended in irreparable disaster, had it not been for the almost incredible blundering of the French leaders, and the indomitable spirit of endurance which gave final victory to a handful of Englishmen driven into a corner, over organised armies of tens of thousands led on by all the chivalry of France. The battle of Azincourt sixty years later was like that of Poitiers over again. In both of these the French crown was at stake, and in both it was practically lost; but there was this enormous difference, that Henry V. at Azincourt, as elsewhere, was *in earnest*, and the Edwards, father and son, were not; for had they been so, the Black Prince, after the battle of Poitiers, might, and would, have marched unopposed through the heart of France, and dictated his own terms in her capital.

THIRD DECADE.—A.D. 1347-1357.

CHAPTER III.

THE POITIERS CAMPAIGN.

UNDER pressure of the double alarm caused by the English invasion and the emptiness of the French exchequer, King John had taken the unwonted and critical step of calling together the States General of France, or rather, of the northern portion of his kingdom in which the 'Langue d'oil' was spoken. For France was at this date divided into two great provinces, the Langue d'oc and the Langue d'oil, the former speaking the Roman Provençal, and ruled by custom, the latter speaking the Roman Wallon, and governed by written law. The Langue d'oc of those days comprised the whole of the country south of the line of

King John summons the States General.

the Dordogne, whereas, in modern French geography, it is limited, like our own 'Northumberland,' to a small central portion of the wide territory once included in its boundaries and implied in its name. Though, like all French kings, extremely unwilling to grant his subjects a voice in their own government, John's great uncle, Philip the Fair, had invented this institution (les Etats-Généraux) in imitation, probably, of the Spanish Cortes or the English Parliament. But the States were so unfrequently and capriciously assembled as to offer no resemblance, except in outward form, to free parliaments. They had no experience in public affairs, were wholly unacquainted with finance, and, indeed, the public accounts of France were kept on so rude and cumbrous a system that 'experts' only professed to understand them. Roman instead of Arabic numerals and notation were used in keeping these accounts, and, in fact, continued to be used in France down to the 18th century. The States on this occasion hardly knew the way to set about the problem proposed to them—namely, how to raise a sum of money which should enable the Government to pay off the more urgent public debts, store the arsenals, equip the soldiers, and remedy the disastrous consequences of the debasement of the coinage. They granted the King a liberal supply, but, in order to raise it, imposed two taxes of a most oppressive and unpopular kind, viz., an *octroi*, or duty, of eightpence on the pound of everything sold; and an impost upon salt, the Gabelle,—which has always been, for some mysterious reason, peculiarly exasperating to the French people. One of the results of this measure was a renewal of hostilities between King John and the King of Navarre; for he and his barons, and notably the Count of Harcourt, declared that 'whoever else paid the salt tax their people should not,' an insult which the

French King deeply resented, and ere long ferociously avenged.

The eldest son of King John was Charles, afterwards called the 'Dauphin,' the first of that title, which has ever since been borne by the heir-apparent of the kings of France, the reversion of it having been sold to Philip VI. by the last Dauphin of Viennois. This Charles having been created Duke of Normandy, had, at his father's instigation, invited the nobles of that province to a banquet at his Court at Rouen. As they sat at table the King of France entered, accompanied by a marshal with a drawn sword in his hand, and seizing Charles of Navarre and shaking him, cried out furiously, 'By the beard of my father, I will neither eat nor drink as long as you are alive!' An attempt was made at resistance, but it was overpowered by King John's attendants, who, at his command, carried off the King of Navarre, and kept him in safe custody. The Count of Harcourt and other barons were also seized; then, after the King had leisurely dined, he and the young Duke, with their retinue, took horse and rode out to the 'Field of Mercy,' and there witnessed the execution of the Count and the other nobles. The more important victim was sent to Paris and committed to the prison of the Louvre. Upon this his brother Philip of Navarre, and Godfrey, brother of the murdered Count, having sent their defiance to 'John, calling himself King of France,' took ship for England and threw themselves into the arms of Edward.

King John seizes the King of Navarre.

The English King espoused their quarrel, and sent orders to the Duke of Lancaster to march into Normandy to their assistance. The Duke's brief campaign in that province was inglorious, and unimportant except for the advantage it gave to the French King; who, having raised an army to resist him and overrun Normandy, was

able at once to march southwards and get beforehand with the Prince of Wales. It was feared that the Prince's invasion by way of Bordeaux (p. 151) was directed against Paris, so King John took up his headquarters at Chartres, a position which enabled him to command at once the approaches to the capital, and the passages of the Loire. Young Edward had begun to be called the Black Prince, not from the colour of his armour, as is generally supposed, but in imitation of the French, who named him, perhaps in no very complimentary sense, 'Le Prince Noir.' But he probably took pride in a title more famous and dearer to the English than that of Duke of Aquitaine or Prince of Wales, and in his will we read of the black drapery of his 'Hall' and the black devices and plumes which he used only at tournaments. He now marched out of Bordeaux with an army which probably never exceeded 8,000 men, and must have been considerably reduced in number before the day of the great battle. He crossed the Dordogne at Bergerac, and overran in turn the counties of Querci, Limousin, Auvergne, and Blois; but it was not till he had got as far north as Vierzon that he learned that the French army, in great force, was in possession of the line of the Loire. Whatever may have been his intentions, it had now become evident that to effect a junction with Lancaster by marching into Normandy was out of the question; but, as the French army lay north of his position, he reckoned on being able to command a safe retreat with his accumulated spoils, to Bordeaux. The farthest point which he reached was Romorantin, which it took him three days' hard fighting to reduce, though not only cannon, but Greek fire also, are said to have been employed in the siege. After this perilous delay—for he was in complete ignorance of the movements of the French—he commenced his retreat by way of Poitiers toward Bordeaux.

Second Campaign of the Prince of Wales.

Meanwhile King John, who if he then meant to intercept the Prince, had already lost precious time, moved his forces across the Loire ; and the two armies marched along only a few miles apart, in two lines at first nearly parallel, but soon converging rapidly on the village of Chauvigny, where there was a bridge over the Vienne. But the French crossed the river first—though it took their long columns of mailed horsemen more than a day to pass over the bridge—and on Saturday, September 17, the Prince discovered, by finding a reconnoitring party driven in on his front, that the French army now lay between himself and home. This troop of observation was commanded by a Gascon lord, the *Captal* (or chieftain) de Buch, who, from this time forward, becomes one of the most prominent figures in the war. When he brought to the English camp the news of the position of the French forces and of their prodigious numbers, the full danger of his situation flashed at once on the mind of the Prince. 'God help us,' said he ; 'all that is left us is to fight as best we can.'

Battle of Poitiers.

As the only fear of the French was lest the enemy should escape out of the trap into which they had been brought, they allowed the Prince leisure to choose his own position, which he did with consummate generalship and rare good fortune. The main strength of the French army lying in its splendid cavalry, while the English had but a small force of men-at-arms and relied chiefly upon their archers—it was of the first importance to select a battle-field affording effectual cover for the latter, and at the same time presenting every possible natural obstacle to the movements of horse. Such a spot they found, some five miles from the city of Poitiers, on the edge of the plains of Maupertuis, overlooking a valley which was intersected by the little river Miauson, and already filled, as far as the eye could see, with the glittering squadrons

of 40,000 French cavalry. The hill itself was surrounded with close fields and with hedges, then in the thick leafage of autumn—through which arrows could fly, but mounted men could not make their way. One steep lane through which four horsemen could barely ride abreast led up to a vineyard on the hill, and there the Black Prince and his little force of English men-at-arms took up what many, doubtless, thought was their last stand, at daybreak on Monday, September 19, 1356. One-half of the archers had been placed close along the back of the hedges on either side of the hollow lane; and one-half were posted in front of the Prince's position, drawn up in open lines, one man behind another, and presenting to a bird's-eye view a strong resemblance to a harrow.

Both armies had taken up their respective positions and expected battle on the Sunday, but before the attack sounded the Cardinal Talleyrand-Périgord gained audience of the French King, and with uplifted hands entreated him to pause. 'Most dear Sire,' he said, 'you have here with you all the flower of knighthood of your kingdom against a handful of people, such as the English are when compared with your army, and you may have them upon other terms than by a battle—which will be more honourable and profitable for you than to risk such a fine army and such noble persons. I implore of you, therefore, for the love of God, to let me go to the Prince and remonstrate with him.' The Cardinal found young Edward fully conscious of his perilous situation, and even in want of food; and, in answer to the question whether he would accept mediation, he said at once that he was ready to listen to any terms that would save his own and his soldiers' honour. The Cardinal returned to King John, and representing to him that it was impossible for the English to escape him, gained his reluctant consent to a truce till daybreak on

Intercession of Cardinal Périgord.

Monday; upon which the King dismissed his army to their quarters, and caused to be erected on the spot where he stood his 'rich pavilion of vermilion samite.' The Cardinal passed a busy Sunday between the royal tent and the camping-ground of the Prince, endeavouring, with evident sincerity of purpose, to stave off the impending conflict. The Prince on his part was willing to yield up all the places and towns which he had taken, to set all his prisoners at liberty without ransom, and to swear an oath that he would not appear in arms against France for seven years. But the Bishop of Châlons, who hated the English King, rose up in the French council of war, and said that it would be folly and weakness not to grasp 'the victory of blood' which God Almighty had put into their hands. This cruel and unchristian suggestion prevailed over the benevolent efforts of the Cardinal, who was told plainly enough at last that he 'might go home as soon as he pleased or worse might betide him.' The final terms offered to the Prince were that the rest of the English army would be allowed to depart, on condition that he and one hundred of his knights should surrender at discretion to the French King. These were conditions which even the pacific Cardinal could not urge upon the acceptance of the Prince, to whom he said, at parting, that there was now nothing for it but to fight it out, and to fight his best. Young Edward answered, 'That will I and my soldiers do, and God defend the right.' During the whole of that Sunday (well or ill-spent, who shall say?) the English had been raising banks and digging trenches, and making barricades of waggons to strengthen the weak points of their position; and Monday morning found them cool and collected, and drawn up as on the Saturday before. The battle was to be fought on foot, but the Prince and his men-at-arms had their horses close at hand, and a small squadron kept

French conditions rejected.

their saddles, to be ready for an emergency. A new feature in the disposition of to-day was that a body of 300 bowmen and as many more men-at-arms were placed in ambush behind a rising ground at a little distance on the French left, to be ready at a critical moment to make a flank attack on the 'battle' of the Duke of Normandy; who, with the two elder sons of King John, commanded the second of the three grand divisions of the French army, the first being led by the Duke of Orleans, and the third, which stood as a reserve in the rear, by the King himself. Each of these 'battles' consisted of 16,000 men-at-arms, and 'there,' says Froissart, 'might be seen all the flower of the nobility of France richly dressed out in brilliant armour; no knight or squire, for fear of dishonour, dared to remain at home.' When both armies were arrayed, King John asked the advice of Sir Eustache de Ribeaumont, who, together with his old companion De Chargny, was in the field, as to the best means of attacking the English position. He replied, with bad judgment, but fatal persuasiveness—'On foot, Sire, except 300 chosen men, the best soldiers in your army, who must be well mounted and armed, to break, if possible, this body of archers; then your battalions must advance on foot and attack the men-at-arms hand to hand.'

The first assault on such a position could be little better than a forlorn hope; but the 300 'enfans perdus' were quickly found, and, headed by Clermont and D'Andrehen, the two Marshals of France, the doomed squadron advanced to dislodge the English archers. The latter withheld their shot till the column had fairly entered the lane and were spurring through it to get at the 'harrow' of bowmen drawn up at its farther end; then they let fly so thick and fast, and at such deadly short range, that the narrow passage was choked up with men and horses struggling in the agonies of death, and advance and

retreat became alike impossible ; while the archers posted at the head of the lane, and the archers who lined the hedge on either side of it, poured in volleys of arrows which no armour could resist, upon the writhing masses of fallen horsemen. A few of the most daring or desperate broke through the hedges and reached the open space before the English front in twos and threes : but not a man of the column of the Marshals got near enough to exchange a blow with the enemy.

Meantime the carnage was fearful. D'Andrehen was unhorsed and taken, and Clermont slain. The rear of this column fell back upon the second battle commanded by the young Duke of Normandy, which now began to open and to waver. This was the moment eagerly expected by the 600 men in ambush, who now, topping the hill which had hitherto concealed them, charged down the slope with irresistible impetus upon the flank of the disordered battalion. Upon this, the lords who had charge of the French King's sons hurried them off the field under the escort of 800 mounted men-at-arms : their departure was taken for flight by the whole division, and was the signal for a general *sauve qui peut.* All these movements however had but cleared the field of battle for nobler combatants. The third division, led by the French King, and the men-at-arms of the Black Prince, had hitherto been only lookers-on ; but when the second battle of the French began to break, Sir John Chandos spoke thus to the Prince : ' Sir, the day is ours : let us mount and advance upon the French King. I know him for a brave knight whose valour will not let him fly, and he will remain with us, if it please God and St. George.' The Prince was only too ready to take his share in the strife and danger of the day, and the main strength of the English army abandoning their sheltering vines and hedges, spurred on into the open plain. The Duke of Athens, now Constable of France,

encountered them half-way at the head of a splendid troop, shouting, 'Mountjoye, St. Denys!' to which the English shouted back, 'St. George for Guienne!' and charged them at full speed, overthrowing horse and man, and slaying the Constable and those of his staff who could not save themselves by flight. A like fate befell the German squadron and its three earls, who next threw themselves in the way of the English horse as they made for that part of the field where the King himself had taken his stand.

As the Prince's column drew near, King John and his guards dismounted—a fatal step when charged by cavalry in an open plain—and met the shock on foot. But the French far outnumbered the attacking column, and the struggle was long and hard fought. 'King John, on his part, proved himself a good knight, and, had a fourth of his people behaved so well, the field would have been his.' He stood, battle-axe in hand, in the thickest of the fight, dealing his blows right and left against his assailants, his little son Philip, crouching close behind him, with his arm round his father's waist, warning him against unexpected thrusts. Twice wounded in the face, he was at length beaten down, and De Chargny, who bore the Oriflamme, was struck dead at his side. Nineteen of his knights were accoutred like himself to deceive the enemy; but he seems to have been recognised, for desperate efforts were made to capture him, and his assailants cried out, 'Yield, or you are a dead man!' 'To whom should I yield?' said the King. 'Where is my cousin the Prince of Wales?' 'He is not here,' said a broad-shouldered knight, who had forced his way through the press, 'but yield to me, and I will carry you to him.' 'And who are you?' said John. 'My name,' replied the knight, in pure French, 'is Denys de Morbecq, of Artois, but I serve the King of England because I have

forfeited all that I possessed in France.' 'I yield to you, said the French King, handing his right-hand glove to the outlawed knight. But the others were by no means disposed to surrender the King and the little prince, who never left his father's side, and a struggle ensued; in which the royal captives ran the risk of being roughly handled. Meanwhile the Prince of Wales, who, unable to penetrate to the French King, had been raging 'like a fell and cruel lion' in the mêlée, was carried off exhausted and weary by Sir John Chandos, and compelled to sit down and rest himself and drink a cup of wine. His banner was then hoisted on a neighbouring bush as a rallying-point for the scattered English knights, who soon gathered round in ever-increasing numbers. The minstrels sounded, the trumpets and clarions blew, and a crimson tent was erected for the night quarters of the conquerer. As soon as his marshals came up, the Prince enquired if any one had tidings of the King. 'Nothing certain,' was the reply, 'but he must be either killed or a prisoner, for he never quitted his post.' Then the Prince sent in search of him the Earls of Warwick and of Suffolk, and these, on reaching a rising ground, beheld a crowd tumultuously advancing with a captive in the midst of them. The English and the Gascons were disputing the possession of the prisoner, who said to his captors, 'Gentlemen, gentlemen, I pray you carry me and my son courteously to my cousin the Prince, and do not fight about me, for I am a great lord, and able to make you all rich.' When the English earls saw the tumult, they set spurs to their horses, and riding up, learned from the bystanders that the captive was indeed the King of France, and that no less than ten knights laid claim to him as their lawful prisoner. Then the barons, pushing through the crowd, ordered all men in the Prince's name to draw aside on pain of instant death, and dismounting, advanced

with profound deference towards the King and conducted him to the Prince's tent.

The battle of Poitiers had some points of resemblance and many of difference as compared with that of Creci. Both victories were won by a compact little regular force over an enemy with an overwhelming preponderance of numbers, but badly posted, ill-handled, and over-confident. In both battles the plebeian soldier, of the class which had been cut to pieces at Hastings, but had won the day at Bannockburn, proved himself once again a match, and more than a match, for the knights and nobles, whom chivalry had held invincible by men of low degree. The defeat of Creci was attributed, and probably attributable, to the sullen and cowardly conduct of the Genoese mercenaries at the commencement of the battle, while at Poitiers the fatal omen of failure in a first attack was given by the picked soldiers of the national army. Again, the latter battle was ended and the victory of the Black Prince secured earlier in the day than the battle of Creci began, and that too over an enemy refreshed with sleep and far better cared for than the English, instead of, as at Creci, over a force which straggled into the field of battle wet, hungry, dispirited, and footsore with a long previous march. But the most striking difference between the two battles, and one which went a long way to redeem the defeat of Poitiers, was the heroism of the French King and his body-guard of nobles, while, with 'all but life and honour lost,' they stood at bay on foot against their mounted assailants. 'Those that were there,' says Froissart, 'behaved themselves so loyally that their heirs to this day are honoured for their sake.' As for the King himself, it was no empty compliment which the Prince paid him as he waited at supper that evening on the royal captive. 'Dear sir,' said he, 'do not make a poor meal because the Almighty God has not

given such an event to the day as you could wish. You have this day gained such high renown for prowess that you have surpassed the best knights on your side; and all on our side who have seen and observed the actions of the day allow and decree you the prize and garland.'

Of the English army, the Black Prince proved himself to be the first in prowess as in command, and John of Chandos, the Captal de Buch, and Lord Audley, with his four squires, won great glory by their valour and deeds of arms; but indeed it might be said of the English at Poitiers as of the Scotch at Flodden Field:—

> Groom fought like noble, squire like knight,
> As fearlessly and well.

Proceedings after the battle.

The next morning the conquerors set out for Bordeaux, leaving the rich city of Poitiers unmolested, for they were already encumbered with spoil, and glad to make the best of their way home. As the number of their prisoners exceeded that of their whole army, they agreed to ransom them at once at the price each set upon himself, and dismissed them, on their promise to come to Bordeaux with the money before Christmas. A peace for two years was concluded with Charles Duke of Normandy, now Regent of France in his father's captivity, for the Prince had determined to detain King John and carry him to England. He paid 2,000 marks to De Morbecq pending the decision of the dispute which still hotly raged as to the claim for the King's capture; and he had also to distribute a sum of 100,000 florins among the Gascon lords before their 'loyalty' would permit 'their sovereign lord and king' to be taken out of the country; 'for,' as Froissart says, 'great rewards and profits are all that a Gascon loves or desires.' In those days a prisoner taken 'to mercy' in battle became the absolute property and chattel of his captor;

but when the former was of exalted rank, and the latter a simple soldier of fortune, the king generally speculated on the ransom of the captive; and secured his custody for his own purposes by paying over what seemed a small sum from the royal exchequer, but was in all probability a large one relatively to the means of the captor. Thus, as we have seen, Sir J. Coupland received an annuity of 600*l.* or 900 marks, (the mark being worth 13*s.* 4*d.*,) for the surrender of his captive the King of Scotland, whereas King Edward demanded from the Scots 10,000 marks a year for ten years for his release; and in the case of the French King, though it had cost Edward no more than 2,000 marks to secure from De Morbecq the possession of the prisoner, he did not scruple to demand for his ransom three million crowns of gold, a sum equivalent to 450,000*l.* sterling. (*See* Memorandum on Money, page xix.)

After a stormy passage of eleven days, the Prince arrived with his royal prisoners at Sandwich, and rode thence to London. On their way they fell in, it is said, with King Edward, who was hunting in a forest through which they had to pass. Whether in levity or in simplicity, Edward invited the captive monarch to join him in the chase; and on his declining this ill-timed offer, assured King John that he was quite at liberty to enjoy himself in hunting or 'at the river,' when and where he pleased, during his stay in England: then, sounding his horn, he spurred on after his hounds and was lost in the woods. This anecdote is given on the authority of Villani, a contemporary historian, but a foreigner, and is itself antecedently improbable; for Edward, though far from being a perfect character, was rarely found wanting in the tact and delicacy which became a true knight, or (to translate into modern phrase) the instincts of a gentleman.

King John in England.

Historians vie with each other in praising the modesty and courtesy of the Black Prince in his treatment of the captive King; but it is difficult altogether to acquit him of affectation and self-consciousness on the occasion of their entry into the city of London, the account of which reads more like that of a Roman triumph than of an English welcome. A thousand citizens in the dress of their respective guilds, and headed by the Lord Mayor, received them at Southwark, and marched back with them in procession to the city. Arches were thrown across the streets; trophies of arms and gold and silver plate were exhibited in the windows, and all, as it was said, in honour of the vanquished King; who took his part in the pageant mounted on a white war-horse splendidly caparisoned, while the Prince of Wales rode alongside of him 'on a little black hackney.' They stopped at the Savoy Palace, belonging to the Duke of Lancaster and standing on open ground on the bank of the Thames, for there the King and the young French prince were to reside. They were afterwards removed to Windsor, and thence to Hertford Castle, where King David of Scotland also was a prisoner.

FOURTH DECADE.

1357-1367.

CHAPTER I.

FROM THE BATTLE OF POITIERS TO THE DEATH OF KING JOHN.

KING JOHN had remained in easy captivity with the Black Prince in the Abbey of St. Andrew's at Bordeaux till the spring of 1357, when they sailed for England. The Regent of France, Charles Duke of Normandy, now the Dauphin, had in the meantime again summoned the States-General of the Langue d'oil (see page 151) to meet at Paris to take into consideration the state of the kingdom. It was not too soon. The exchequer was empty, the coinage debased, the army utterly demoralised, and respect for government and authority at an end. Multitudes of disbanded soldiers formed themselves into 'Companies,' living by the open plunder of those who were not strong enough to defend themselves; and over all the country brooded the shadow of national defeat and shame. The nobles taken prisoners at Poitiers and released on parole turned to their estates to find the means of paying their ransoms, which equalled, and in many cases exceeded, half the selling value of the land, had sale been possible. But the Jews and other wealthy foreign money-dealers who might have come forward as purchasers or mortgagees had all been banished from France; and nothing was left for it but to make the

A.D. 1357. Condition of France after battle of Poitiers.

miserable tenants yield up their little hoards, if they had any, or to compel them to beg, borrow, or steal the money for the release of their lords, whom they had always hated as selfish and oppressive masters, and now despised as cowards and traitors to their country. The serfs were ordered to find the money by a certain day, and, in case of default, they were put to the torture and their goods and chattels seized and carried off. It was the heartless jest in the mouths of the unworthy gentlemen of France: '*Jaques Bonhomme* has a good broad back—he must bear the burden.' '*Jaques* will not pull out his purse till you beat him, but *Jaques* will pull out his purse soon enough when you do.' The unfortunate peasantry were hunted down like vermin and put to cruel deaths. All who escaped fell into the clutches of the 'Companies,' who stripped naked those to whom the lords had left a shirt, tormented and mutilated young children as well as men and women, and robbed the last of all that was left them when money, clothing, and household goods were gone. Multitudes of these unhappy beings took refuge at night time, huddled together with their families and their flocks and all that they could save, on the islands in the Loire, or on rafts moored out of reach of the banks of the river. Others dug ditches round their villages, and placed sentinels in the church towers to give the alarm on the appearance of an armed man. But all these precautions only whetted the excitement of the chase, and the eagerness of the man-hunters to get at their prey.

These 'Companies,' though they fought and plundered on their own account, brought the English into great odium and discredit. One of them, which infested the district between the Seine and the Loire, was commanded by a Welshman; another by an Englishman, Sir Robert Knolles, who afterwards, as will be seen, distinguished himself in legitimate warfare. A third was commanded

by Arnold de Cervolles, a liegeman of King Edward and one of the heroes of Poitiers, of whom we shall hear again. He was surnamed the 'Archpriest,' on account of a benefice which he held, but his wild and undutiful doings in the neighbourhood of Avignon sadly disturbed the mind of the Pontiff at the head of the Church. Meanwhile Charles, the regent, and the other royal and noble fugitives of Poitiers, so far from bowing their heads in sympathy with the miseries of their country, were vying with each other in ostentatious luxury and extravagance under the indignant eyes of Paris. Fresh taxes were daily imposed, and the coinage debased to the extent of 600 per cent.

The States-General met at the end of 1356, and went to work in the spirit of sobered and earnest, but not hopeless, men. Rejecting all the dishonoured scions of royalty, they chose Charles of Blois as their nominal president; but the real leader of the assembly was Etienne Marcel, the Provost of the Merchants. Proceedings of the States-General. [A.D. 1356.]

The defenceless state of Paris was the first anxiety, and immediate steps were taken, under the auspices of Marcel, to fortify the town, and train the citizens to the use of arms. Resolutions were unanimously passed that the King's ministers should be replaced by a council to be chosen by the States, and that the King of Navarre should, 'for the good of the kingdom,' be released from captivity. The Dauphin had no intention of acquiescing in these demands. He showed considerable address in persuading the States to adjourn before matters came to a crisis, and summoned the Parliament of the Langue d'oc (the Southern Provinces), which indeed promised a liberal subsidy for the defence of the country, but insisted no less on a reform in the administration. They claimed to vest the right of expending the moneys raised by

taxation in commissioners appointed by themselves,—to assemble and dissolve when they thought proper, and to withhold supplies altogether if the coinage were again tampered with. Lastly, they prohibited all persons, of what degree soever, from wearing silver ornaments, pearls, and rich furs, and the minstrels and jongleurs from exercising their gay callings, for the space of twelve months, while the country was in mourning and her king a captive in a foreign land.

Meanwhile, Philip of Navarre, indignant at the prolonged detention of his brother, took up his headquarters at Evreux, and gathering round him the partisans of Navarre, threatened the capital with an attack from without, while an insurrection was ripening within the walls of Paris, and exasperated citizens paraded the streets in arms. It was under these circumstances that the States again assembled. They repeated their former demands in a more peremptory tone, and attempted to place the government as it were in commission, by nominating a council of thirty-six, who became virtually the executive. But Charles, whom his countrymen called 'the Wise'—though in England the epithet would probably have taken a different turn—fortified by orders from the King his father forbidding all men to obey the decrees of the States, would probably have contrived to hold his own in defiance of the assembly, had not the revolution suddenly taken a new form, with which his timid and crafty genius was less competent to deal. Marcel, who up to this time had been working manfully and loyally in the interest of the government and the country, convinced at length that all attempts to induce or compel the Dauphin to act honestly would be unavailing, determined, in an evil hour, to baptize the cause of the people in blood. He and his associates had adopted a red and

A.D. 1358.

Marcel has recourse to violence.

blue striped cap as the badge of their fraternity, and on a certain morning the tocsin sounded from the towers of Notre Dame, and the streets surrounding the Louvre, where the Dauphin had entrenched himself, were soon densely filled with a fluctuating sea of parti-coloured caps. Marcel entered the palace unopposed at the head of 3,000 men (for Charles gave himself out as the friend of the people), and, confronting the Duke, accused him of taking no part in the defence of the country. The Duke retorted bitterly that to defend the country was the busines of those who received its revenues. More angry words followed, and at length Marcel, turning to the striped caps who had entered with him, cried out, 'Do that for which you came.'

Two French marshals, the confidential advisers of the Duke, were seized and massacred upon the spot, and he himself was only too glad to escape through the throng under Marcel's protection, in the disguise of a revolutionist with a parti-coloured 'bonnet' on his head. But Marcel, who ought to have known that a revolution begun with blood could not be carried on with rose-water, now fell into the fatal error of allowing the Duke, who thirsted for revenge, to leave Paris and preside at the assembly of the Southern States. Charles found them exasperated at the assassination of the marshals, and quite ready to support him in retaliating upon its authors. News reached Marcel that the Duke was marching upon Paris. He first attempted in a noble and eloquent letter, which has been preserved, to dissuade him from such a course; but, finding his remonstrances unavailing, he seized upon the Louvre and expelled the royal garrison, pulled down the houses built against the ramparts, threw chains across the river, and prepared to stand a siege.

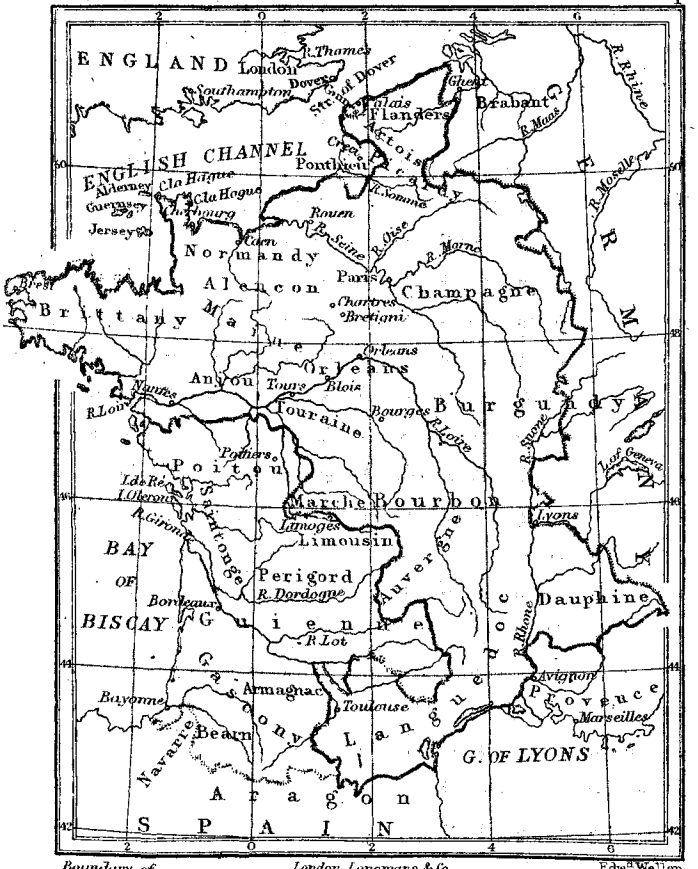
Murder of the French Marshals.

But a new and more formidable danger now arose, in

presence of which both factions stood aghast. The '*Jacquerie*' had begun. This outbreak, exhibiting as it were, in a typical form, the dangers of oppression pushed to extremes, and the excesses of which a mob will be guilty 'when they are so unfortunate as to become for a time their own masters,'—has been used to point the moral of many a diatribe; now against the tyranny alleged to be inherent in aristocracies, now against the savage ferocity and the destructive instincts of the 'masses' when not kept under habitual and watchful repression. But, in truth, the movement was of so exceptional a character that it possesses for us little more than a historical interest, for it is almost inconceivable that such a combination of circumstances could exist in the Europe of our day. The Jacquerie, doubtless, had some points of resemblance, but very many of dissimilarity, with the great French revolution of the eighteenth century. It was, like that, a national uprising against the tyranny and selfishness of the aristocracy, but it differed from it in being a blind outbreak of fury, without political objects, without intelligent leaders, and without permanent results. It had about it nothing of the religious exaltation of the sanguinary *Pastoureaux*, who, fifty years before, swarmed over France, and offered up all Jews and heretics as a holocaust to God. The Jacquerie had not, like them, any expectation of the advent of the reign of Justice; they had not even a concerted scheme of emancipating themselves. The movement was, as has been well observed, 'one of those sympathetic acts which put on the appearance of organised combination.' It exhibited the spectacle of a whole population suddenly possessed with the same devil of bloodthirstiness as a Javanese fanatic when *running amuck*. It is, perhaps, not very difficult to account for the peculiar ferocity of these insurrections upon

The 'Jacquerie.'

FRANCE AFTER THE TREATY OF BRETIGNI



Boundary of English Territory as settled by the Treaty of Bretigni 1360 } Red

London, Longmans & Co. Edwd Weller

French soil. The spirit of English legislation, even at a time when all English legislators belonged to the aristocratic class, was marked by an especial tenderness and consideration for the poor; and however much the English nobles may have oppressed their serfs by tallage, forced labour, and personal violence, they do not seem at any time to have habitually insulted and derided their inferiors in station with the class pride and brutal scorn which characterised the French nobility.

"A few peasants in the neighbourhood of Clermont, armed with knives and bludgeons, broke into a château, set it on fire, and murdered the inmates. Then, like a wild beast that has tasted blood, the mob, daily growing in numbers and in ferocity, swarmed round, broke into and gutted castle after castle, from the battlements and loopholed windows of which the lords had looked down in indifference or derision, while the defenceless cottages of their dependants were sacked and pillaged by the 'Companies.' 'Death to the gentlemen' was the watchword of this delirious revolt, which spread like wildfire through France, for its cry for vengeance found an echo in the heart of every peasant in the land. Their numbers soon swelled to 100,000 men, and Marcel thought it prudent to seem to make common cause with them to some extent, in the hope of mitigating or restraining their ferocity.

Relief of Meaux.

The first check which the outbreak met with was at Meaux. The Dauphin had seized upon this city in order to cut off the supplies of the Seine from Paris, and had connected and strengthened the buildings enclosing the market place, which became thereby one huge fortress. Thither his Duchess had fled for safety, and, with her, 300 of the noblest ladies of France. Now the royal garrison at Meaux had oppressed the citizens till they could no longer bear their insolence and exac-

tions; and, in despair of relief from any other quarter, the inhabitants called in the Jacques to their aid; and admitted within the city some 10,000 half-armed, half-starved, and half-maddened ruffians, along with a troop of Parisians despatched with the best intentions, but with very doubtful wisdom, by Marcel. The situation of the poor ladies was now critical in the extreme. They had nothing to hope for from the mercy of their assailants, and the garrison was too weak to hold out long against such overwhelming numbers. But help came from an unexpected quarter. The Captal de Buch, and Gaston de Foix, a gallant knight of Gascony, surnamed 'Phœbus' from his youthful beauty, were returning with 100 lances from a crusade against the Pagans in Prussia, (see page 48), and learned, in passing through Châlons, that an adventure lay ready to their hands; an adventure which combined every element of attractiveness to knightly spirits—a suzerain's authority outraged; fair ladies in danger; plebeian insolence to be avenged; and desperate odds against the avengers. They rode, scarce drawing rein, to Meaux, fought their way to the entrance of the market place, were admitted through its gates, and, forming within, again threw them open and poured forth, an iron stream, into the midst of the half-defenceless rioters, and slaughtered them like sheep. The miserable wretches fought desperately for their lives, but a few only, in the outskirts, escaped the swords and spears of the men-at-arms.

At about the same time a sanguinary massacre of the Jacques took place in Normandy, under the orders of the King of Navarre, and the fugitives from the slaughter carried the news into all parts of the country. Taking advantage of the panic caused by these reverses, the gentry plucked up courage, and sallying forth with their armed retainers from the towns in which they had found

refuge, assumed the offensive in their turn; and inflicted such a murderous retaliation on the unfortunate peasantry, now awakening, dizzy and dispirited, after their debauch of blood, that, to use the words of an old French chronicler, 'it needed not the English to destroy the country, for in truth the English, enemies of the kingdom, could not have done what the nobles did.'

The result of the whole was that the peasantry of France sunk down into mere abject servitude, misery, and despair. But this fearful outbreak, so disastrous to France, scarcely affected, after the first moment, the relations of the leaders of political parties, whose intrigues went on unchecked through the midst of the national agony.

We left the Dauphin advancing on Paris with an army from the south, and Provost Marcel in possession of the city and fortifying it against impending siege. The recent measures of the latter, whether well intentioned or not, had unfortunately identified him with the foes of order. Six months before this date, backed by the express opinion of the States-General, he had entered the royal prison of the Louvre and released the King of Navarre. The liberated sovereign had been received with acclamations by the people, to whom he declared that, if he chose to stand upon his rights, he could show a claim to the throne of France better than that of King Edward of England (page 72). At that time, however, it did not suit Marcel's purpose to throw down the gauntlet to the regent representative of the reigning dynasty; but now, seeing that he had gone too far to retreat, he took a step fatal to his own influence and the cause which he had at heart, by calling in, and appointing 'Captain-General of Paris,' as a step to a still higher dignity, the King of Navarre, whose recent massacre of the Jacques had alienated from him the sympathies of the popular party; while at the same time the

Marcel's intrigues with Charles the Bad.

misguided Provost invoked the aid of the 'Companies,' justly regarded as the scourge of France and the common enemies of mankind. The King of Navarre, as was to have been expected, betrayed his associate's intentions, and made an offer to the Dauphin to abandon Paris to its fate, and to give up Marcel and his friends to vengeance. The unpopularity of that ill-advised but able and single-minded patriot, whose sole object throughout seems to have been to deliver his countrymen from bad government and oppression, was completed by an unfortunate accident. A party of brigands in Marcel's pay, returning to Paris, had set fire to a homestead not far distant from the Porte St. Martin. The angry citizens saw the conflagration from the walls of Paris, and as soon as the troops entered the gates, fell upon and massacred them, and seized the captain of the band, who had been dining, at the Hôtel de Nesle, along with Charles of Navarre.

That King then withdrew to St. Denys, where the number of his forces and his hostile attitude so alarmed the citizens of Paris that they compelled Marcel to write to the Dauphin entreating him to enter Paris and protect them against the Navarrese. That astute Prince, however, well knowing that discord within the city was his best ally, answered that he would never set foot in Paris as long as the murderer of the marshals was alive. And now Marcel, abandoned by all, and with the ground trembling under his feet, determined on the desperate and treasonous step of introducing the King of Navarre, at the head of a body of troops, into Paris by night, and proclaiming him King of France. The plot was discovered; and when Marcel rode up to the gates to give admittance to the Navarrese, the royalist governor of that quarter of the city mounted his horse, and shouting 'Montjoye St. Denys, for the King and the Duke!' galloped round to raise the people.

Death of Marcel.

A throng gathered about, and there arose a fierce and angry strife of tongues, in the heat of which the unhappy Marcel was struck down and murdered, with the fatal evidence of guilt, the keys of the city, in his hand.

A period of miserable anarchy followed. The Dauphin and the King of Navarre both took bands of the 'Companies' into their pay and let them loose upon each other and upon the country, which lay for the most part deserted and untilled, and disfigured with the blackened ruins of homesteads, castles, and churches. Writing a short time after these events, the poet Petrarch thus describes the state of things which he witnessed in France:—'I could not believe that this was the same kingdom which I had once seen so rich and flourishing. Nothing presented itself to the eyes but a fearful solitude, an extreme poverty, land uncultivated, houses in ruins.'

But desperate as was the condition of the country, and low as France had fallen, the Dauphin and the States wisely, and with one voice, rejected a treaty of peace signed by King John in 1359. For in this he had agreed to cede to England nearly the whole of the western seaboard of France, with its ports and islands, and an inland sweep of provinces which would have equalled if not surpassed in extent the famous territorial dower brought to Henry II. by Eleanor of Aquitaine.

Upon the indignant refusal of the Government to confirm this treaty, King Edward III. made immediate preparations for an invasion of France on a scale exceeding that of all his former expeditions. A hundred thousand men sailed from Sandwich 'between daybreak and sunrise' on October 28, and before nightfall entered the harbour of Calais. They had to carry a great part of their supplies with them, for France was known to be almost a desert, no tillage having been attempted for three years.

Edward's invasion of France.

A.D. 1359.

Eight thousand cars, each drawn by four horses, conveyed their stores; mills and ovens for making bread; portable forges and leather fishing coracles for the supply of the army with fish on fast days. Thirty mounted falconers accompanied the march; thirty couple of greyhounds; thirty of strong lurchers for the greater game. The enumeration of these items almost describes by anticipation the character of this expedition: the English King marched along at his ease, hunting and hawking; the Dauphin shut himself up in Paris, leaving the other cities to defend themselves as best they might. But Edward, averse to fighting, passed by the fortified towns and left them unmolested, as the Black Prince had done in his last campaign, and marched straight upon Rheims, in order to be crowned King of France in the royal city. Rheims was too strong to be taken by assault, so he sat down before it to a winter siege, his officers and troops occupying the abbeys and villages in the neighbourhood. But the season was one of the worst on record. Before Christmas the provisions, which had to come from Hainault and the Cambresis, began to fall short, and, as the Dauphin showed no signs of being tempted out of Paris,

A.D. 1360. Edward raised the siege of Rheims in January and marched upon the capital itself. He took up his quarters at Chatillon, and Sir W. Manny skirmished up to the walls of Paris. The French regent adhered to his policy of inaction, only burning the suburbs to prevent their affording protection to the invaders. He forbade his soldiers to pass the barriers, and rejected all Edward's overtures for peace, though urged to accept them by his own counsellors; and the English King determined to withdraw into Brittany to recruit his army, which had suffered much by the winter campaign, intending to return to the siege of Paris in the autumn.

He was already on his way when, at the instance of

Pope Innocent VI., the most powerful, prudent, and possibly disinterested, of the Avignonese pontiffs, the Dauphin at last gave way, and consented to sue for peace. The ambassadors from the French court overtook King Edward at Chartres. His retreat had been hasty and calamitous, and he had left his line of march strewn with the corpses of famished soldiers and 6,000 horses dead of starvation. Lengthened discussions took place, which would in all probability, like so many previous negociations, have led to no conclusion, had it not been for the occurrence of a thunder-storm, so sudden, terrific, and destructive, that the superstitious feeling of the time attributed it to a direct interposition of Divine power to put a stop to the sufferings of the people. It did apparently awaken the English King to a sense of the horrors caused by his ambition. A peace, one of the most important in mediæval history, was signed at Bretigni, near Chartres, on May 8, 1360. By this King Edward agreed to renounce formally and for ever, at a certain time and place, all claim to the throne of France, and to the ancient possessions of the Plantagenets north of the Loire and its tributaries—Anjou, Maine, Touraine, and Normandy — on condition of a similar renunciation, on the part of the French King, of all right, title, overlordship, or suzerainty over the rest of the inheritance of Queen Eleanor, from the Loire to the Pyrenees, a large portion of which had been wrested from England by Philip Augustus in the reign of King John. Both kings were to give up their claims to the homage of Flanders and Brittany, and De Montfort and Charles of Blois, the competitors for the duchy, were to fight out their quarrel, assisted or not by England or France, without prejudice to the treaty. There were other complications arising out of previous engagements on each side; but the Pope conveniently stepped in,

Peace of Bretigni.

and absolved both the high contracting parties from 'any oaths or obligations which were contrary to the articles of peace.' King John was to be ransomed for 3,000,000 crowns of gold; 600,000 crowns were to be paid before he passed out of the gates of Calais, and 400,000 more in each subsequent year. Two months later the captive King was escorted to Calais by the Black Prince and the Duke of Lancaster, and there the treaty was solemnly ratified, both kings kneeling before the altar, taking into their hands the consecrated Host, and swearing to the faithful observance of their engagement on the 'body of Christ.'

King John's ransom paid.

Such was the condition of France that this humiliating treaty was welcomed by the people; but in the then exhausted state of the national finances and the depreciation of the coinage, there seemed little or no probability of the first instalment of the ransom being paid. At this juncture, however, a demand was made for the hand of King John's youngest daughter, Isabel, by the ambitious head of the great and wealthy house of the Vesconti; who, in the Pope's absence, united in themselves the civil and spiritual supremacy in the north of Italy, and subsequently purchased the title of Dukes of Milan from Wenceslaus, King of the Romans. He offered, upon the marriage of that princess to his son and heir, John Galeazzo, to pay the 600,000 crowns demanded by England as the first instalment of the ransom of King John; and this undignified and mercenary contract being agreed to, with some reluctance by the French, the marriage took place, and the money was paid. Hostages were given for the remainder of the ransom—the Duke of Orleans, the Dukes of Berri and Anjou, second and third sons of the King, together with others of the royal family, and forty citizens of the principal towns in France. The ransomed King

was everywhere received 'greatly and nobly;' and when he arrived at Paris 'beautiful gifts and rich presents' were bestowed upon him, and 'he was waited upon and feasted by all the chief prelates and barons of the kingdom.'

But though the ceded provinces were, with many a heartburning and threat of rebellion, handed over to the nominal sovereignty of England, the 'renunciations' under the treaty were never made; and this unfortunate omission furnished both Charles V. of France and Henry V. of England with a formal justification for reviving a war which brought a succession of disasters to both kingdoms.

The events which took place in France between this date and the fresh outbreak of war in 1369 may be briefly dismissed. Reviving prosperity was checked by the fact that the country had been deliberately portioned out among themselves by organized bands of freebooters. The great war had attracted needy adventurers from all parts of Europe, and as they had nothing to live by but their swords, when the unwelcome peace was proclaimed, they kept possession of the fortresses which they occupied in defiance of the Kings of England and France. A 'cloud' of these brigands, of mixed race, spread themselves over the eastern provinces. They called themselves the *Tard-venus*, or late comers, and set themselves diligently to work in order to make up for lost time. The 'Great Company' pillaged the country round Avignon, and were advancing upon the city when the Duke of Bourbon and De Cervolles, 'the Archpriest,' were ordered from Paris to attack and disperse them. The Duke, however, fell into a snare, and was surrounded and A.D. 1362. slain, with vast numbers of the flower of the royal troops. The brigands then marched to Avignon; but the Pope bethought himself of the happy expedient of hiring them out to the Marquis of Montserrat, who was warring with the Lords of Milan. It will be seen shortly how the Dau-

phin Charles managed to dispose of a great part of the remainder of these embarrassing auxiliaries.

Meanwhile, the three 'Lords of the Fleur-de-lys,' the Dukes of Orleans, Berri, and Anjou, growing weary of their exile in England, besought King Edward to allow them, under certain conditions, to repair to Calais, and thence to make excursions as they pleased into the country, on their word of honour to return before sunset on the fourth day. The Duke of Anjou took advantage of his liberty for four days, to break his parole, and never went back to Calais. King Edward wrote a letter urging him to return, 'for that by his treachery he had tarnished the honour of himself and all his lineage.' King John too was so deeply affected by a breach of faith in which he thought his own honour involved, that, in spite of the remonstrances of his nobles, he determined to yield himself back into captivity; but so far was the Dauphin from sharing his father's feelings that he shortly afterwards appointed his perjured brother his lieutenant-general in Languedoc. King John returned, with his other kinsmen, to England, but returned only to die, three months after his landing at the Savoy Palace. He was, however, received in London with all the respect due to a monarch who prized his honour above his freedom, and the King and the nation vied with each other in their endeavours to make his captivity pass lightly. Among the hospitalities which he received, one is mentioned which seems a remarkable evidence of the growing political and social importance of trade. The Lord Mayor of London, Sir Henry Picard, a wine merchant of Gascony, entertained the French King and his sons, together with the Kings of England, Scotland, and Denmark, 'in his house in the Vintry, near St. Martin's Church, and kept his hall in the evening against all comers who were willing to

A.D. 1363.

A.D. 1364. Return and death of King John.

play at dice or hazard;' while 'his lady Margaret kept her chamber for the entertainment of the princesses and ladies' of the Court.

FOURTH DECADE.—A.D. 1357–1367.

CHAPTER II.

THE PRINCE OF WALES IN AQUITAINE AND IN SPAIN.

IN 1362 the Prince of Wales was married to his cousin the Fair Maid of Kent, becoming thus the third husband of that beautiful princess; and she, in 1364, bore him a son, Edward, surnamed of Angoulême, who died at the age of seven years; and, in 1366, a second son, afterwards King Richard II. Shortly after his marriage Prince Edward was created "duke" of the reconstituted English dominion of Aquitaine—his father having wisely determined to keep the absolute sovereignty of the territory in his own hands, and for this government he started the following spring. He found Charles the Dauphin writhing under the treaty of Bretigni, and ever on the watch for opportunities of fomenting discord among the new subjects of the Prince. The French regent still felt unequal to an open rupture, and was waiting upon circumstances, with a foresight and patience which won him his surname of 'the Wise,' and was amply justified by the ultimate result, so disastrous to England and so fortunate for France. While he was pursuing this policy of 'masterly inaction,' he had singled out a man of remarkable military capacity, named Bertrand Duguesclin, to carry on his wars with the King of Navarre; who was now virtually in possession of Normandy, though he had left the lieutenancy of it to

A.D. 1362.

Prince of Wales Duke of Aquitaine.

his brother Philip, and withdrawn to his own Spanish dominions. Philip of Narvarre died in 1363, and Duguesclin marched with his free companions into Normandy. He was a man of low associations, and rough in looks and manners, but possessing the sovereign faculty of command. He warred after his own fashion, caring more for victory than the rules of war or the punctilios of chivalry, and the success of his tactics contributed not a little to the decline of that brilliant but artificial condition of society. He got possession of many strong places held for the King of Narvarre, and gained a crushing victory at Cocherel over the Captal de Buch, whom that sovereign had appointed his lieutenant in Normandy on his brother Philip's death—and sent him a prisoner to Paris. During his captivity there the Captal had secret orders from the King to arrange a peace with the Government of France; and this he accomplished on advantageous terms for his master; who, after his base and treacherous conduct all round, thereby recovered the whole of the territory that he had lost in Evreux.

A.D. 1364.

In Brittany the old quarrel still raged on, but it was on the eve of extinction at last. John de Montfort had laid siege to Auray, and begged for help from the Prince of Wales, who sent the brave old John of Chandos and Sir Robert Knolles to his assistance. Charles of Blois sought aid from Charles the Wise, now King of France, who sent Duguesclin to reinforce him. A decisive battle was fought under the walls of Auray, in which Duguesclin was made a prisoner, and Charles of Blois unhappily, or happily, slain. A treaty of peace was signed by his widow, the heroic Jeanne of Penthièvre, by which that earldom was secured to her and her heirs for ever, and John de Montfort was left in undisputed possession of the Duchy of Brittany.

Settlement of affairs in Brittany.

A.D. 1365.

A new set of actors now enter upon the scene.

The table of the kings of Castile shows how its reigning sovereign, Pedro the Cruel, ascended the throne on the death of his father, Alphonso XI., in 1350. He was crowned at the age of sixteen, and when eighteen years old was married to Blanch of Bourbon, youngest sister of Jeanne, the wife of Charles the Dauphin of France; but the sympathies of the reigning French dynasty leaned, as will be remembered, to the De la Cerdas, the elder branch of the family of Alphonso X. Pedro inaugurated his reign, like a king of Dahomey or Ashantee, with a batch of assassinations; the first of his victims being Leonora de Guzman, the mother of his illegitimate brother Henry of Trastamare. Each succeeding year was marked by cruel and vindictive executions; the victims being the most eminent of the Spanish nobles, three of his own half-brothers, and lastly the unhappy Bourbon princess whom he had made his wife. Charles of France deeply resented the murder of his kinswoman, and his pride was stung by the fact of Pedro's declaring that when he married the sister-in-law of the Dauphin, he had a wife living, Maria de Padilla, to whom, in fact, he returned two days after that marriage. But Charles had another reason for regarding Pedro as an enemy; he was the ally of England. Friendly relations had long subsisted between the Plantagenets and the family of Pedro. Eleanor of Castile had been the beloved and devoted wife of Edward I.; Joan, daughter of Edward III., had been affianced to Pedro himself when cut off by the plague in 1348, and a treaty offensive and defensive had been made between the two sovereigns in 1362. King Charles saw that he could strike a blow at England through Don Pedro, without infringing the treaty of Bretigni. But the King of Castile had a more dangerous enemy in the Pope, whose wrath

The Spanish Campaign of the Prince of Wales.

he had incurred by oppressing the Church, and holding amicable communications with the Moorish King of Granada. On his refusal to appear before the Papal Court to answer these charges, Urban V. severely, and in all probability conscientiously, orthodox,—legitimatised his half-brother Henry of Trastamare, and encouraged him to avenge his mother's assassination and aspire to the throne of Castile. Urban joined with the King of France in hiring the 'Companies' to support the claims of Henry by arms, and in ransoming Duguesclin for 100,000 francs, in order to place him at their head. Duguesclin found little difficulty in engaging the services of the 'Companies,' though he thought it necessary to represent to them that the expedition was directed against the infidels in the south of Spain; 'if, however, they should come across Don Pedro on their way, they would not fail to harass and anger him.' The next step was to remove the ban of excommunication which the Pope had laid upon the 'Companies,' and to procure absolution for them at his hands. Urban urged that an absolution was always paid for; if he granted this, they had no claim upon the 200,000 florins which he on his part had engaged to pay them. Duguesclin only laughed at this pretext, and repeated his demand; but when he found that the Pope was raising the money by taxes imposed upon the Avignonese, he refused to receive a coin unless the full tale was paid out of the Papal treasury. Among the leaders of the allied invaders were Calverly, Knolles, and many other English and Gascons owing fealty to King Edward, who wrote them a peremptory warning to desist from the undertaking, and 'not to take up arms against the noble prince the King of Spain.' But they were already beyond the Pyrenees. At Barcelona they were joined
A.D. 1366. by Henry of Trastamare, and a message was sent from thence to King Pedro 'that they were coming,

and intended to open the roads and passes of his kingdom to the pilgrims of God, who, with great devotion, had undertaken to enter the kingdom of Granada to avenge the sufferings of our Lord, destroy the infidels, and exalt the true faith.' Don Pedro laughed, as well he might, at their transparent hypocrisy, and sent back word that the King of Castile would have nothing to do with such a set of vagabonds. But he had miscalculated his resources, and underrated the vehemence of the hatred which his cruelties had provoked. One Spanish lord, and one only, joined his standard—Fernando de Castro, the brother of the hapless Iñez, Queen of Portugal, over whose fate the poet Camoens dropped many a 'melodious tear' in after days.

The revolution was bloodless, and Henry of Trastamare found himself King of Castile without striking a blow, and in fact embarrassed by the strength of his army, whom he had some difficulty in persuading to return, without fighting anybody, to France. Pedro, glad to escape with his life, took refuge in Seville, and thence made his way through Portugal to the Court of the Prince of Wales at Bordeaux, and threw himself on his protection. His two daughters, Constance and Isabel, accompanied him, and the exiles seem to have exercised a strange fascination over the Prince. He refused to listen to the advice of his counsellors, who represented to him that the banished King was a cruel and a wicked tyrant, whose calamities were the manifest punishment of God to chastise him, and give an example to other kings. In the eyes of chivalry a dethroned monarch, though guilty of every crime, and justly detested by his subjects, was as legitimate an object for sympathy and assistance as a prisoner in Paynim captivity or a maiden in danger of violence. The question was, however, referred to England, where King Edward and his Council

took the same view as the Black Prince, and decided that he should support the claims of his suppliant with all the forces at his command. As for the payment of the war expenses, Pedro made large promises. He had, he said, great treasures hidden away in Castile, and covenanted to pay a sum of 600,000 florins before next Midsummer. John of Chandos and other experienced advisers of the Prince, anticipating treachery, but seeing that their master's mind was already made up, prevailed on him to coin his gold and silver plate into money, and to beg his father to send him the next instalment of the ransom of King John. The Prince unfortunately made himself personally responsible for the payment of the expenses of the war, relying on the good faith of Don Pedro, who left his two daughters, Constance and Isabel, as hostages with the English Court.

The King of Navarre had already signed an agreement with the new King of Castile, by which he undertook to prevent the invading forces from entering Spain through his dominions. This presented a formidable obstacle, for such was the difficulty of the passes over the Pyrenees that a handful of resolute men could have held them against a host; and the only other way by which an army could enter Spain lay through the territories of the King of Aragon, the firm ally of Henry of Trastamare. But the King of Navarre, with characteristic falseness and venality, meeting the Parliament of Aquitaine within a short time after his engagement with Henry, then and there solemnly covenanted to allow the troops of the Black Prince to cross unopposed, in consideration of the payment of 250,000 gold florins and the cession of the province of Guipuzcoa. The 'Companies,' who had previously joined the standard of Henry of Trastamare, were, for the most part, liegemen as well as old soldiers of the Black Prince; and, fondly

remembering their former fellowship in honourable and victorious arms, needed little more than a hint from him to change sides and join the invading forces. A strong reinforcement arrived from England under John of Gaunt, now Duke of Lancaster in right of his wife, for he had married Blanch, daughter and heiress of the great Duke, and her father had fallen a victim to the second outbreak of the Plague in 1361.

News now reached the English camp that Charles the Bad was again making overtures to Henry. To trust him further was hopeless, so the Prince ordered two frontier towns of Navarre to be occupied with English troops, and compelled the King himself to accompany the army through the passes of the Pyrenees. They threaded the Pass of Roncesvalles, where neither 'Charlemagne' nor 'all his peerage fell,' as Milton has it, but where his rear-guard was cut off by the Basques and Gascons. The Prince's army encountered no human opposition, but were nearly overwhelmed by a terrible snow-storm in the pass. At length, however, they arrived with little loss on the borders of Castile, though they had been deprived of the guidance of the King of Navarre; who was taken prisoner under circumstances giving rise to more than a suspicion that an understanding existed between himself and his captors. Here a messenger met them from Henry of Trastamare, with a letter saying that 'he had no doubt that the Prince had come to fight a battle with him,' and inquiring 'at what place he meant to enter Castile, that he might be there to receive him.' 'Truly,' said the Prince, on reading the letter, 'this bastard Henry is a valiant knight, of great prowess.' He then advanced to, and occupied, Salvatierra, where Pedro could hardly be withheld from slaughtering the garrison. In the meantime Henry, whose herald had been allowed A.D. 1367.

to return,—uncertain as to the movements of the invaders, and waiting for the arrival of Duguesclin and his company, sent out his brother Tello with 6,000 men to reconnoitre, and attempt a surprise of the English. Tello fell in with three several detachments of the Prince's army, and, after putting them one after another fairly to the rout, returned in safety to his quarters. The camp of Henry was wild with exultation, and the troops clamoured to be led against the enemy, but a tried and valiant marshal ventured to warn his master not to trust too blindly to the superiority of numbers, or their first success over the Prince's troops, 'for,' said he, 'they are the flower of all the chivalry of the world, and will die sooner than yield. Be led by me, and stop the passes against their supplies, and you will not have to strike a blow, for they will perish by cold and hunger.'

But the Black Prince was once more destined to owe salvation and victory to the impatient folly of his enemies in not leaving him to starve. He advanced towards Vittoria, hoping that this would be the scene of the decisive struggle, and here he waited six days for tidings of the enemy, his supplies melting away, his troops perishing by exposure, and his situation hourly becoming more critical. But Vittoria was still to wait four centuries and more for its renown as a battle-field, and the Prince crossing the river Ebro in search of better camping-ground, took up his quarters at Navarrete, on the right bank of the river. Meanwhile Henry of Trastamare, deaf to all suggestions except the prompting of his own reckless courage, no sooner received certain information of the position of the enemy, than he broke up his camp, crossed the Ebro, and marched down its right bank till brought up by the Najarilla, an affluent of the Ebro, and which now separated the two armies. His

forces consisted of 70,000 men; the three divisions were led by Duguesclin, Tello, and himself. The English army numbered only 27,000, and its three corresponding divisions were headed by the Prince of Wales, the Captal de Buch, and the young Duke of Lancaster, with whom was John of Chandos, who never left his side through the battle, 'as in former battles he had always been at the right hand of the Black Prince.' The last-named division and that of Duguesclin first engaged, while Don Pedro and the Prince advanced upon the wing commanded by Tello. A sudden panic seized upon Tello, who had borne himself so bravely a few days before, and, without waiting for the onset of the English men-at-arms, he turned and fled from the field with 2,000 horse. Battle of Navarrete.

The Prince then assailed the main body of the enemy. He was received with a storm of stones from the Balearic slingers of the King of Aragon, who were to the Spanish army what the long-bowmen were to the English. But the English archers proved superior to these as to all other marksmen, and under the deadly shot of their arrows the Spanish lines begin to waver and give ground. Then the men-at-arms bore down upon their broken front, and a furious hand-to-hand contest ensued between the iron-clad horsemen of the Prince and the tens of thousands of the Spanish infantry. The Spaniards fought bravely; their enormous superiority of numbers did not fail to tell, and it was long impossible to forecast the issue of the struggle, or say to which side victory inclined. Sir John Chandos, equally hard pressed by Duguesclin and the heavy-armed cavalry of the 'Companies,' had at length been borne to the ground by a gigantic Castilian, who lay upon him and was about to give him his death-blow, when the gallant old knight drew a dagger from his bosom and stabbed his adversary

to the heart. Then rising up unwounded, he remounted his horse, and gathering his best lances round him, charged, broke, and put to flight Dugueslin's force, and once more made that famous captain his prisoner. This was the turning point of the battle. Sir John Chandos's division, thus set free, assaulted the main body of the enemy in flank, and the fight raged with renewed fury round King Henry and the Prince of Wales. Three times were the Spaniard's troops broken and driven back, and three times he rallied his forces and hurled them against the English line. But all was in vain. The flight of Tello had been a fatal omen; the capture of Dugueslin completed the discouragement of the Spaniards, and they no longer fought as men fight who are animated with the hope of victory. The battle was clearly lost, and Henry rode from the field, leaving 6,000 of his followers dead upon the ground. Don Pedro, in whom reason seems to have been obscured by the long indulgence of homicidal instincts, put to death in cold blood all but one of the Castilian nobles whom he had got into his power, and was prevented only by force from immolating the 2,000 prisoners who fell into the hands of the Black Prince. After the victory of Navarrete, Burgos opened its gates to the allies, and deputies from the several provinces hastened to tender their allegiance to their former sovereign, while tournaments, banquets, and processions celebrated the reinstatement of the bloodthirsty tyrant of Castile.

Money difficulties.

But now arose the anxious question of money, and Pedro, when called upon for the covenanted payment of the expenses of his allies, protested his good faith, and begged permission to repair to Seville to raise the necessary funds, with a solemn promise that he would return before Whitsuntide. By imprudently consenting to this proposal the Prince

lost all hold over his faithless protégé. Whitsuntide came, and three weeks more passed, but there were no tidings of Pedro. Sickness broke out in the English camp, and it is said that no less than four out of every five of the soldiers perished. The Prince himself had an attack of illness (attributed by many to poison), from which, whatever may have been its cause, he never afterwards recovered. Messengers were at length despatched to Seville, who brought back such an answer as showed at once that no good faith or gratitude was to be looked for from the treacherous Castilian. At the same time intelligence came from the Princess of Wales that Henry of Trastamare had invaded Aquitaine; and so, after a brief but brilliant campaign, crowned with a victory which alone would have made a lesser name illustrious, the Black Prince withdrew through the defiles of Roncesvalles to his own dominions, broken in spirits, shattered in constitution, overwhelmed with debt, and leaving behind him four-fifths of his gallant army dead on Spanish ground.

Illness of the Black Prince.

FOURTH DECADE.—A.D. 1357–1367.

CHAPTER III.

DOMESTIC AFFAIRS.

THE narrative of the Spanish expedition has been dwelt upon at some length, partly because the victory of Navarrete stands out prominently in the annals of English heroism, but chiefly because to the secondary consequences of the campaign, as will presently be seen, is distinctly traceable the loss of all that England had gained in France by the battle of Poitiers.

But there were in the home history and domestic legislation of the decade, the external events of which we have just considered, many points of great interest and importance which cannot be passed over. A second outbreak of the Plague occurred in the Autumn of 1361, to which the illustrious Lancaster of the Wryneck fell a victim. The years 1362-3 were as fruitful in legislation as 1352 (25 Edward III.), and witnessed the same minute and vexatious interference with trade which characterized the enactments of that year. There was hardly an article of ordinary consumption which escaped being meddled with by the Parliaments of these two years. In the first place, as above stated, the staple, or privileged market, for reasons which it is difficult to comprehend, much more to justify, was fixed at Calais; and peculiar commercial advantages and immunities were granted to that port, a number of articles being specified which could not be sent out of England except thither. The result of this was that, during the three years which the statute remained unrepealed, the whole of the export trade of this country was compelled to pass through Calais. These regulations were founded on the vicious and self-destructive principle of directly enhancing revenue at the expense of commerce; but it is difficult to see how they could have conduced even to that object in any way beyond affording greater facility and certainty in collecting duties; an advantage which would probably be more than counterbalanced by the diminution of traffic consequent upon the harassing restraints to which enterprise was thereby subjected. But indeed export trade was reduced to a minimum by prohibitions and all but prohibitory burdens. Manufactured wools, the 'cloths called "worsteds"' (from a village of that name in Norfolk), butter and cheese, and

Domestic affairs of the decade.

A.D. 1362-1367.

a host of other English productions were absolutely forbidden to be sent out of the country, to the great injury and discouragement of the producers of those articles, and with the avowed intention of keeping down prices. In September 1362 even wool and woolfels were forbidden to be exported, but in the following month the prohibition was removed. The reason for its removal was stated with remarkable candour, viz., that the 'King had regard to the great subsidy which the Commons have granted him, now in this Parliament, of wools, leather, and woolfels, to be taken for three years.' By ancient custom the King's collectors levied half a mark from denizens, and 10*s.* from aliens, on each sack of wool and every 300 woolfels; but the royal officers had learned from the results of the arbitrary imposition of the 'maletolt' (p. 73) how great an additional burden of taxation this commodity would bear, and at one critical time—that of the second French invasion—special duties were imposed, amounting to the enormous amount of 50*s.* on the sack of 364 lbs. The King could in fact by an understanding with 'the trade,' increase at will the duty on wool. The merchants, securing the monopoly, were willing to pay the 'maletolt,' and recoup themselves out of the pocket of the consumer. The export of horses, hawks, plate, coin, and coal was forbidden or checked by prohibitory duties, and one restrictive ordinance of this date is of a remarkably comprehensive character, declaring that 'no wines, corn, beer, animals, whether flesh or fowl, horses, clergy, foreigners or others, shall be allowed to pass out of the kingdom without special leave.' The closest surveillance was exercised over the arrivals and departures; even traders on business from Scotland were obliged to secure a safe-conduct. Merchant ships crossing the Channel were compelled to be armed or provided with an escort. But a strange light is thrown on the

insecure condition of the interior of the country by the fact that traders could not venture to travel through England with their waggons of merchandise, except in large bodies, accompanied by a strong guard of armed men, like the caravans in the desert.

While the foreign trade was thus minutely regulated, business transactions at home were even more inquisitorially and despotically dealt with. It seems to have been a general principle of legislation in those days to endeavour to protect the buyer against the producer, and with this object, to mark off sharply the distinctions between the different trades; the reason given being 'the great mischiefs that have happened . . . . of that the merchants called grocers do ingross all manner of merchandise vendable, and suddenly do enhance the price of such merchandise within the realm, putting to sale by ordinance made betwixt them, called the Fraternity and Guild of Merchants, the merchandises which be most dear, and keep in store the other till the time that dearth or scarcity be of the same.' It was therefore ordained that all merchants should deal in one kind of merchandise only, and make up their minds 'betwixt then and Candlemas' what that kind should be. No one should 'meddle with the mystery of fishmongers except those that belong to it;' no one 'should use the mystery of drapers without being apprenticed to it.' So with the dealers in wine and the dealers in poultry; and as for the goldsmiths, it was specially enacted that 'no goldsmith making white vessel shall meddle with gilding, nor they that do gild shall meddle with white vessel.' These measures would not have been complete without an attempt at the always unprofitable and hopeless task of regulating personal expenditure by law. We find it embodied in a statute of the Parliament of 1363 'that the poor come to eat and drink in the manner that per-

taineth to them and not excessively.' No servant was to wear a suit of clothes costing more than two marks, or veils above 12*d.* value; 'shepherds and all manner of people attending to husbandry were not to wear any manner of cloth except blanket and russet wool of 12*d.* a yard.' It is a curious coincidence that just about this time Archbishop Islip addressed his famous 'remonstrance' to King Edward on the abuses, and especially the foppery and the extravagance, of the Court, beginning, 'Domine mi rex, utinam saperes;—a document well worth study, as coming from a favourable quarter, and yet giving a picture of the King's government very different from the current traditions, which represent him as the idolized ruler of a happy and contented nation.

All this was the work of the Parliament of 1362–63, but they seem to have had some misgivings as to the policy or the practicability of carrying out these regulations, for they recommended 'that the things agreed to should be put by ordinance, and not by statute, in order that if there were anything to amend it might be amended in the next Parliament.' It is somewhat of a relief to find that in that next Parliament many of the most oppressive and injudicious of these enactments were actually repealed, but it was not till 1365 that the staple was removed from Calais.

It is somewhat remarkable that after the siege of that city we hear little or nothing more of firearms in the wars of this reign. The importance of archery was never more conspicuous than in the battle of Navarrete; but it would seem from a letter of King Edward to the sheriffs of the counties in 1363 that there was a tendency among the people to a diminishing trust in this arm. 'Whereas,' so runs the circular, 'the people of this country . . . . did commonly exercise themselves in the

art of archery . . . . whereas now, as if entirely putting aside the said art, the same people take to the throwing of stones, wood, and iron, and some to handball, football, stickplay, and to the fighting of dogs and cocks . . . . it is to be proclaimed that every man in the country of able body on feast days shall use bows and arrows . . . . in his games, and give up those vain games, under pain of imprisonment.'

English language.

Another memorable fact in the history of the memorable year 1362 was the Parliamentary ordinance that the English instead of the French language as heretofore, should be used in pleadings in the courts of law. In Stat. I. c. 15, 36 Ed. III. the change is said to have become necessary because the "French tongue is much unknown in England, so that the people which do implead or be impleaded in the King's Court or in the courts of other, have no knowledge or understanding of that which is said for them or against them by their serjeants or other pleaders." See below (pp. 263 *et seqq.*), where some account is given of the way in which English became the national language. It must be borne in mind that at the date of this statute commanding the public forensic use of the English tongue, Wiclif and Chaucer, the fathers of English prose and of English poetry, had already begun their task of creating an English literature.

Statute of Kilkenny.

But of all the legislative measures of this period the most notable was the Statute of Kilkenny, passed at a Parliament held in that town, in the last year of the decade, in the Lent session of 1367. This 'famous, or infamous,' enactment gathered up into one, and recapitulated with additional aggravations and insults, all the former oppressive, exasperating, and iniquitous ordinances by which English legislation for Ireland had hitherto been disgraced. In the reign of

Edward II. the disaster of Bannockburn and the patent incapacity of the Government had kindled expectations in the hearts of the Irish of uprooting for ever the hated alien rule. But these hopes of national emancipation were disappointed, though under the brief reign of Edward Bruce the area occupied by the English of the Pale was considerably contracted, and a large number of the Irish regained possession of their lands. Among the earliest measures passed in the reign of Edward III. was a statute directed against absenteeism, obliging all Englishmen who were Irish proprietors either to reside on their estates or to provide soldiers to defend them. But this enactment was unproductive of good results. The O'Neills drove the colonists out of the 'liberty of Ulster,' and the English De Burghs, so far from helping to uphold English ascendency, appropriated to themselves the entire lordship of Connaught, made common cause with the native tribes, and adopting their dress, language, and customs, became *Hibernis ipsis Hiberniores*, threw off their allegiance to King Edward, and bade defiance to the King's authority. Thus it came to pass that before many years of this reign had elapsed more than a third part of the territories of the Pale was again in the hands of its original possessors.

Had English statesmen contemplated only the alternatives of the enslavement or the extermination of the conquered inhabitants; had they, on the one hand, expected to be able to reduce them to the condition of Helots, indifferent to freedom or incapable of resistance; or, on the other, indulged the hope that the Irish would decay and disappear before the colonists as savage aborigines melt away before a stronger race, their policy would indeed be explicable. But the native race was endowed with far too much vitality for the latter fate, and with far too much pride, courage, elasticity, and genius

for the former; and the half-measures which were adopted tended only to exasperate, and not to coerce or overawe.

Edward III. inherited the barbarous and iniquitous traditions of English rule in Ireland, but he improved upon them. He ordered all his officers in that country who had Irish estates to be removed and give place to Englishmen with no Irish ties. He next declared void every grant of land in Ireland since the time of Edward II., and made new grants of the lands thus recovered to the Crown. The tendency of this monstrous measure was to create two more antagonistic parties in Ireland, destined by their bitter dissensions to bring about the result that ere long 'all the King's land in Ireland was on the point of passing away from the Crown of England,' —viz. the 'English by blood,' as the established settlers were called, and the 'English by birth,' or new grantees. Some of the chief of the former, in despair of a career, or even of a quiet life, at home, were about to bid good-bye to Ireland and seek their fortunes elsewhere, when they were arrested by a proclamation making it penal for any English subject capable of bearing arms to leave the country. In 1357 was passed the monstrous enactment already described, forbidding marriage and 'gossipred' between English and Irish. In 1359 Edward forbade the election of any 'mere Irish' to the office of mayor, bailiff, or other civil post of authority. But the 'evils' against which these statutes were directed continued to increase. The 'English by blood' became more and more intimately connected and identified with the native Irish, and the 'English by birth' became more and more powerless to maintain the English ascendency; till at last, in 1361, the King determined on sending over a viceroy of the blood royal, and appointed to the post his son Lionel, created shortly afterwards

Duke of Clarence, whom he had married to Elizabeth de Burgh, daughter and representative of the last Earl of Ulster. But though Prince Lionel, on his arrival, took the precaution of forbidding any man born in Ireland to approach his camp, his position soon became so critical that the King issued writs commanding all the absentee Irish lords to hasten to Ireland to the assistance of the Prince, 'for that his very dear son and his companions in Ireland were in imminent peril.'

The next step was the passing of the Statute of Kilkenny. It re-enacted the prohibition of marriage and foster-nursing, rendered obligatory the adoption of the English language and customs, forbade the national games of 'hurlings and quoitings,' and the use of the ancient Gaelic code called the Senchus Mor ; a code by which the native brehons, or judges, of the Irish septs had decided causes among them since the time of the conversion of the race to Christianity in the fifth century. The English by birth were no longer to be called in derision 'English hobbes,' nor the English by blood 'Irish dogs ;' but the statute contained no prohibition of the expression 'mere Irish' as applied to the Irish by birth and by blood. Reflecting on the long series of efforts made by the English to legislate for Ireland, and the sum of their past and present results, one is tempted to parody, in a reverse sense, the well-known couplet of Goldsmith, and exclaim—

> How much of all that human hearts endure
> Kings and their laws *can cause* and *cannot* cure.

FIFTH DECADE.

A.D. 1367–1377.

CHAPTER I.

FROM THE END OF THE SPANISH CAMPAIGN TO KING EDWARD'S LAST TREATY WITH FRANCE.

THE last decade saw King Edward III. at the zenith of power and renown. His Court was the most splendid in Europe; the vanquished and captured King of France was its permanent and honoured guest rather than a prisoner. The King of Scotland was there, pleading for a reduction of his ransom; and a third crowned head, the King of Cyprus, had come from that distant outpost of Christendom, to supplicate the aid of the foremost warrior of the faith against the encroachments of the infidel. Popular at home and dreaded abroad, he had obtained by force of arms and by the wise abandonment of his claim to the crown of France, the full sovereignty over a third part of that kingdom; and had committed the safe-keeping of this great dominion to a son the terror of whose name was a better protection than a cordon of fortresses. His fleets rode the Channel as triumphantly as his armies had marched over the soil of France. At home his royal revenue was doubled, and the condition of the people incalculably improved; and a sounder system of government and legislation, because resting on a wider and more popular basis, had been substituted for the thinly disguised and insecure despotism of his predecessors. Before the close of this fifth and last decade of the reign, all that was external of this splendid fabric of prosperity and power had crumbled into dust. The best army that England could raise

Splendour of Edward's reign;

and its decay.

had all but perished of cold and hunger among the bleak hills of Auvergne; her fleets were driven from the seas, her coasts ravaged and burned with impunity; the plague again broke out; the good queen was no more; the Court had become a scene of intrigue, and the royal authority and character had been brought into contempt; —nothing remained of that brilliant forty years past excepting the silent upgrowth of liberty, constitutionalism, and equal rights, which the King and his counsellers had done their best to check, as mischievous and undutiful encroachment.

It is unnecessary to dwell long on the details of the history of this gloomy period, but some short account must be given of the successive strokes of misfortune which brought low the English dominion in France.

The Spanish campaign was, in its immediate and remoter consequences, a fatal triumph for the English arms. The Black Prince, the hope of the future of the country, returned from Spain to Aquitaine a broken, and (though he lingered for nine years)—to all intents and purposes, a dying man. He took the field but once again, and that on an expedition which his biographer would gladly erase from the history of his life. The debts which he had contracted, in reliance on the promises of the infamous Pedro, were so pressing that he had no choice but (1) to dismiss the 'Companies' half paid, with a tacit permission to ravage French territory, and (2) to impose a war tax upon his newly acquired subjects. The tax selected was one of the most unfortunate and unpopular that could have been hit upon, for the French peasant was reminded of its burden every time he lighted his fire of sticks to cook his frugal meal. Each 'hearth' was assessed to pay a duty of half a franc a year for five years. This impost was recommended to the Prince by his Chancellor, but was

A.D. 1368.

Imposition of the hearth tax.

strongly disapproved of by many of his other advisers, and his tried old friend John of Chandos was so convinced of its impolicy and danger that, on his warnings being disregarded, he withdrew to his domain in Normandy. Prince Edward had made an enemy of the Lord of Albret, one of the most powerful of the southern French barons, by dismissing, as unnecessary, five-sixths of the contingent of lances which that noble had brought with him to join the Spanish campaign. He and other disaffected lords whose domains skirted the Pyrenees, determined to resist the tax, and in defiance of the treaty of Bretigni, by which all rights over Aquitaine were for ever ceded to England, they hastened to Paris and appealed to the King of France as their proper suzerain.

It would seem to be impossible, at this distance of time, to attempt to assign to the English and to the French King each his due proportion of blame for the fatal non-execution of the 'renunciations' agreed upon under the treaty. Edward was probably unwilling, on his part, to give up the claim to the crown of France which had cost his country so dear, till the rest of the stipulations had been fulfilled, or due security given for their fulfilment; whereas Charles soon found out that the inhabitants of the ceded districts were not very warm in their new allegiance; and he probably cherished the hope that, before he tied his hands by the execution of formal renunciations, some occasion might arise to enable him to recover all that France had lost in his father's reign. Be this as it may, he listened with a ready ear to the grievances of the discontented nobles; but, unwilling at once to expose his hand, he managed to amuse and detain them at his Court, under various pretexts, for a whole year. At last, in the spring of 1369, he threw off his disguise and summoned the Prince of Wales to appear before him at his Court of Paris, to

A.D. 1369. Prince of Wales summoned to Paris.

answer the complaint of his vassals. Surprise and indignation roused for a moment the old spirit in the failing Prince. 'Gladly,' said he to the messenger, 'we will answer to our summons as the King of France has ordered us, but it will be with helm on head and with 60,000 men.' Until this time Charles, 'wise' with the serpent's wisdom, had kept up a show of friendship with the English Court, and had so far succeeded as to make King Edward turn a deaf ear to the warnings which the Prince repeatedly addressed to his father. The instalments of King John's ransom were punctually paid, and the English King received a present of fifty pipes of wine from his 'brother of France,' which it should be said, however, he immediately returned. Galeazzo Vesconti, the ambitious lord of Milan, having married his son John to the daughter of the late King of France, now determined to ally himself to the royal house of England, and tempted Lionel, Duke of Clarence, then a widower, with the offer of a splendid dowry, to take the hand of his daughter Violante. King Charles received the English Prince at the Court of Paris, with his enormous retinue, on his way to Italy, and feasted them royally for many days. These intimate and cordial relations were rudely interrupted by the news of the summons of the Prince of Wales to appear and answer for himself before the French King. Edward III., seriously alarmed at the turn things were taking, offered once more formally to renounce all claim to the French crown, on condition of being left in peaceable possession of his French territories. This proposal was laid before the Peers of France, who advised their sovereign to reply to it by a declaration of war. King Edward had all along, with his old and justifiable distrust of French courtesies, been making active preparations for the defence of

French courtesies.

A.D. 1368.

A.D. 1369.

The French occupy Ponthieu.

his Continental as well as of his English territories, but on this occasion King Charles was beforehand with him. War was not declared till the French King's plans were ripe for execution, and the very day on which the 'kitchen scullion' who carried the defiance to Edward set foot on English ground, Ponthieu was entered and occupied by French troops, who met with little opposition on the part of the garrisons, and none on that of the population. Shortly afterwards the whole of the English possessions in France were by authoritative sentence and proclamation declared to be 'annexed to the French crown.'

War was now inevitable, but in the meantime events had taken place in Spain which gave King Charles a powerful ally, of whose services he was not long in availing himself. When the Black Prince returned to Aquitaine, and was safe on the French side of the Pyrenees, the ex-King Henry of Trastamare withdrew from his inroad into the Duchy, and re-entered Spain at the head of 9,000 men that he had been enabled to draw to his standard by the assistance of the Duke of Anjou; the runaway hostage whom, it will be remembered, King Charles, his brother, had made lieutenant-general in Languedoc. Henry found that the continued cruelties of Pedro had already disposed the Castilians to welcome a rival claimant to the throne, and he at once gained easy possession of some of the principal cities, but was obliged to lay regular siege to Toledo, which still held out for the reigning King. Here he was joined by 2,000 of the 'Companies' from Languedoc; and a large body of French adventurers in search of glory or spoil, under the command of Duguesclin, who had again been ransomed from Sir John of Chandos for 100,000 francs. Henry soon found himself in a position to take the field against his half-brother. All except the Andalusians had deserted Pedro, but he

A.D. 1368. Spain invaded by Henry of Trastamare.

was supported by 20,000 men from that province, and did not scruple to associate with them 20,000 Moors, whom he procured from the King of Granada by means of his friendship with that monarch's vizier and chief astrologer, Benahattin. He was advancing with this formidable host to raise the siege of his faithful city of Toledo, when Henry, acting under the advice of Duguesclin, marched out to meet him, and the two armies fell in with each other hard by the Castle of Montiel. Pedro's soldiers, who had no suspicion of the nearness of the enemy, were advancing in irregular groups, and Henry fell upon them in detail with his whole force, and put them to the rout, before they had time to form in battle order, or bring each other mutual assistance. The battle was long and bloody, for the Andalusians and the Moors had the advantage of numbers; and the soldiers of Henry, taking them all indiscriminately for 'accursed Jews and Mahometans,' both sides maintained the struggle with the ferocity engendered by antipathy of religion as well as of race. Pedro, to do him justice, fought this, his last fight, like a man, and held his ground till forced off the field by his still faithful friend Fernando de Castro, and hurried for safety into the castle. At midnight he attempted to fly from the stronghold, but was seized and carried into a tent in Henry's camp, where the two brothers were shortly brought face to face. They flung themselves one upon the other with all the fury of mutual hatred. In the struggle Pedro, being the stronger, got Henry down under him, and was in the act of giving him a vital stab, when Duguesclin caught him by the leg and turned him over, and Henry springing up buried his dagger in his brother's heart. This hideous scene was the end of the civil war. Henry of Trastamare was once more proclaimed king, and he and his descendants for

Battle of Montiel.

A.D. 1369. Death of Pedro and reinstatement of Henry of Trastamare.

many generations ruled peaceably over the realm of Castile.

But he could not forget the part which the Prince of Wales had taken against him. During the siege of Toledo he had entered into a treaty against England with the King of France, and was now prepared to give him active assistance in the war which was declared against England within a month of Henry's second accession. The English Parliament was sitting at the time of the arrival of the bearer of the French defiance—a kitchen-boy (*varlet de cuisine*) selected to aggravate the insult of the challenge. As soon as it was ascertained that the letter was genuine, King, Lords, and Commons determined on immediate preparations for a vigorous resistance. The Parliament granted a liberal subsidy for war expenses, and recommended that Edward should again assume the title of King of France, 'just as before the peace which Charles, son of John, late King of France, had broken.' From that time till the reign of George III. the French fleur-de-lys were quartered with the English leopards on our Great Seal.

Declaration of War by France against England.

Preparations for resistance.

The first attack on France was made through Brittany. Its Duke was now, by express stipulation, a vassal of the King of France; but his heart always inclined towards the English alliance, and, though he had done homage to Charles in 1366, in 1372 he had again entered into a treaty offensive and defensive with Edward, and he now welcomed the invaders of France on their disembarkation in his dominions. Sir John Chandos returned to his duty when danger threatened; the Captal de Buch and Sir Hugh Calverly came at the call of the Prince to the rendezvous at Angoulême, where he lay almost helpless from disease and devoured with vexation. Meantime an

Recommencement of war between England and France.

expedition for the invasion of England was being fitted out in the northern ports of France; but the Duke of Lancaster having occupied Calais with a strong force, the invasion was abandoned. The French fleet had only accomplished the burning of Portsmouth, when it was recalled, and King Charles concentrated his soldiers at home, while the Duke was wasting and pillaging far and wide between Calais and the capital. A French force under the King's brother, Philip Duke of Burgundy, largely outnumbering the English, advanced against them, but was withheld from engaging by orders from the King of France. After confronting the invaders for some weeks, the Duke broke up his army, and having lighted his watch-fires to deceive the enemy, decamped under cover of night, just as his grandfather, King Philip, had done twenty years before on almost the same ground, abandoning the citizens of Calais to their fate.

Death of Chandos.

The ensuing winter was made sadly memorable by the death, in a chance mêlée, of the gallant old John of Chandos. Encountering a small body of the enemy at the foot of a bridge over the Vienne, Sir John had dismounted—for the ground was slippery with frost—thinking to fight them better on foot. His leg got entangled in the long robe of 'white samite' which he wore under his armour, and he fell upon his knee. He had lost an eye, hunting, some five years before, and a nameless knight, coming upon his blind side, dealt him a mortal blow in the face, under his unclosed vizor. His loss was a fatal injury to the English cause in the long, desultory warfare that now began and continued for years, with varying success on both sides. It is unnecessary to give the wearisome details. Suffice it to say that every year saw the English dominion more and more disintegrated, and fresh accessions made from it to the territories of France. The Duke of Lancaster, on whom the conduct

of the war devolved, was gifted with no military capacity; and there is reason to suspect that he was even now not uninfluenced by a jealousy of his illustrious brother, and a desire to take advantage of the enfeebled condition of that Prince for his own aggrandisement. King Edward, with his concurrence, and possibly at his suggestion—for he was witness to the order—commanded the Black Prince to remit the hearth tax, and restore the money already paid. He also offered the royal pardon to those who had revolted against the English authority; and sent the Duke with a fresh commission into Aquitaine, nominally to reinforce his brother, but with ample powers of independent action. And now King Charles, believing that the time had come for striking a fatal blow, and having asked for and obtained a liberal subsidy from the States-General, organised a double and simultaneous invasion of the English territory, to be led by his two brothers, the Duke of Anjou and the Duke of Berri. The first army, under the real leadership of Duguesclin, and reinforced by a large body of the 'Companies,' overran the Agenois, taking city after city, and advancing within a few miles of Bordeaux itself. The other entered the Limousin, and laid siege to its capital, Limoges, which was surrendered to them by the treachery of its governor, the Bishop. Sir Robert Knolles meanwhile landed at Calais with 5,000 men, and ravaged the north of France, sparing only the cities which were willing to pay him 'black mail.' He could find no enemy to meet him in the field, and advanced so far as even to threaten the city of Paris, from the ramparts of which the citizens could see the farms and villages blazing. Knolles had risen into notice as a captain of brigands, but was now in the pay of the English King, and is claimed as one of the ancient 'Worthies' of the county of Chester. 'In de-

A.D. 1370.

Limoges taken by the French.

spight of their power,' says Fuller, 'he drove the French people before him like sheep, destroying towns, castles, and cities in such manner and number, that many years after, the sharp points and gable-ends of overthrown houses, cloven asunder with instruments of war, were commonly called "Knolles his mitres."' Duguesclin was summoned from the south to defend the capital, but Knolles, whose followers became unruly and mutinous after a slight reverse, withdrew into Brittany before his arrival.

The Prince of Wales, for some unexplained reason, was beside himself with fury at the surrender of Limoges, and swore by the soul of his father that he would recover the city. He was carried in a litter—for he could no longer ride—up to the walls, and finding the place too well fortified and garrisoned for a successful assault, sat down before it to take it by siege, and his engineers mined the walls night and day. At the end of a month the mine was completed, and the wall stood supported only upon wooden props, with which the miners had shored it up as they worked. Fire was now set to the props, the workmen withdrew, and at 'the hour of prime,' as fixed by the Prince, down crashed 'a great pane' of the wall, levelling up the ditch, and leaving a breach through which the English poured in before the garrison had recovered from the stupor of the shock. Inflamed with revengeful passion and triumph, the Prince 'rode in high mounted (on his litter), with his guards and partisans on foot,' and deliberately ordered his soldiers to dash out with their poleaxes the brains of all they met, and show no mercy to man, woman, or child. A guard of archers was posted at the breach, and another at the gate, to slay the fugitives. 'Surely at such a time,' says Barnes, 'War is drest up in his most Dreadful Habiliments, and that Heart must be very strongly barred against all access of Pitty, which

Recapture of Limoges and massacre of inhabitants.

would not relent at the sight when Men, Women, and Children, with Hands and Eyes lifted, flung themselves on their Knees before the Enraged Prince to entreat for mercy.'

This was the last military exploit of the victor of Poitiers, and one too many for his fair fame. But even then, though mercy was extinct, the class-feelings of chivalry survived. Three French knights, seeing that all was over, resolved at least to sell their lives as dearly as they could, planted their backs to a wall, and with eighty stout men-at-arms beside them, and their banners displayed, awaited the onslaught of the English. The men-at-arms were soon beaten down and slain by overwhelming numbers, but those three knights still stood at bay; and the Duke of Lancaster and the Earls of Cambridge and of Pembroke each singled out and attacked one of them, while the slayers paused from the work of destruction to gaze on the triple duel. The Black Prince was passing in his litter, and his vindictive rage gave way as he saw how gallantly his brothers and the Frenchmen fought. And so, for the sake of these three 'valiant gentlemen,' he commanded that the slaughter should cease, and 'took them and the survivors to mercy.' The traitorous Bishop, the author of the whole calamity, was also spared, at the urgent entreaty of Pope Urban V.; but 3,000 of the innocent plebeian townsfolk were massacred, and the city reduced to ashes.

The Prince, on returning from the sack of Limoges, became rapidly so much worse that his physicians peremptorily ordered his immediate departure for England.

A.D. 1371. Return of the Black Prince to England.

So urgent were they that he left the body of his eldest son Edward, who died at this juncture, to be buried by the Duke of Lancaster, now appointed his successor in the government of Aquitaine. But the duchy was fast slipping out

of English hands; and that it was so is an indication of something more than want of military capacity in the English leaders, or the superiority of French tactics. Charles was 'wise' enough to see and take advantage of the change of feeling that had come over the inhabitants themselves. The newly annexed districts hardly disguised the reluctance with which they submitted to English rule, and even the provinces which had never been separated from the English dominion began to feel that they belonged by natural right to France, and to turn their eyes towards Paris as the proper centre of their national life. The time was long passed for Aquitaine to glory, as it once did, in its independence of the king who reigned at Paris; and the existence of a foreign principality within the geographical limits of France was doomed from the moment that it became 'an anachronism' —that is to say, a fact out of keeping with the times.

But though the Black Prince was, as a soldier, 'as good as dead,' and the King himself enfeebled in mind and body, the English people had no intention of submitting to a dismemberment of the monarchy, and unanimously determined on a new invasion of France. Fatal errors had meantime been committed. The King of Navarre and Robert II. of Scotland had been suffered to ally themselves with the French. This Robert, the nephew of David II., who died in 1371, was the first crowned King, of the family of the hereditary 'Stewards' of Scotland, a title which, under the later form of Stuart, gave a name to our royal English dynasty, the lineal descendants of Robert II. About the same time an untoward concurrence of circumstances confirmed the hostility of the new King of Castile, and made him a bitter as well as a dangerous enemy to England. King Pedro's daughters had been allowed to rejoin their father,

(A.D. 1370.) The Kings of Navarre and Scotland in alliance with France.

A.D. 1372.

and upon his death they fled for refuge to Bayonne, in English territory. John of Gaunt, having lost his wife, who brought him his title of Lancaster, was advised by the Gascon nobles to marry Constance, the eldest daughter. 'My Lord,' they said, 'you are marriageable, and we know of a great marriage whereby you and your heirs will be kings of Castile; and it is a great charity to comfort and advise young girls, and especially the daughters of a king. Take the eldest in marriage, we advise you.' The Duke listened to their suggestion, and he and his brother, the Earl of Cambridge, married the two orphan sisters. The Duke assuming the title of King of Castile, the reigning sovereign had no choice but to repel the pretension by all means in his power, and an opportunity of aggression was not long wanting to his hands. King Edward and his Council having determined to invade France by way of Rochelle, the command of the expedition was given to the Earl of Pembroke, and the King was so ill-advised as to send a 'small force of soldiers,' but 'plenty of money' to pay the troops who, he was assured, would 'flock to his standard in Poitou.' This money, as will be seen (page 228), was chiefly raised on the property of the Church, and to this fact the superstitious attributed the disastrous result of the expedition. At the French King's entreaty Henry of Trastamare sent a Spanish fleet to Rochelle to oppose the disembarkation of the invading forces. The English were in possession of the castle, and nominally of the town, of Rochelle; but in no part of the French territory ceded under the treaty of Bretigni was the ill-will of the inhabitants towards their new masters more strongly felt. When Pembroke arrived with his little fleet off Rochelle, he found forty great castellated Spanish 'niefs' and other vessels drawn up to receive him. The English at once attacked them, and fought so valiantly

Sea fight off Rochelle.

that, when night separated the combatants, the battle was undecided. The governor of the place laboured hard to persuade the townsmen to embark and help the English; but they pleaded that, though they would gladly fight on land, they were no sailors. Next morning at high tide, the Spaniards having the wind in their favour, each of their ships deliberately singled out and grappled an English vessel, and pouring down stones, lead, and bars of iron from the 'tops' upon the deck of the enemy, sent it and its crew to the bottom before the English could climb the steep sides of the Spanish nief. Pembroke himself was taken prisoner, the treasure ship sunk, the whole of the English fleet captured or destroyed, and a blow thus inflicted on England's naval power from which it took many a long day to recover.

But the war still lingered on with varying success. Bertrand Duguesclin, now Constable of France, was the commander-in-chief of the French land forces, and he was ably seconded by Owen of Wales, a famous sea-captain, of whom many brilliant exploits are recorded; among others the capture of the Captal de Buch, the last soldier of mark on the English side. Rochelle was taken by stratagem, Poitiers by treachery; Soubise, St. Jean d'Angeley, and Saintes surrendered; and Thouars and Bordeaux were now the only cities of importance left to the English in Aquitaine. Thouars was already invested by the French, and thither came the Constable Duguesclin, with 7,000 men, to reinforce the besiegers. The barons friendly to England, shut up in Thouars, sent word to King Edward that they had agreed to capitulate if not relieved by September 29. The King made a last effort to fling off his growing lethargy, and proclaimed that he would invade France himself, with his three sons, at the head of his army; and the poor shattered Prince of Wales declared that, though

Siege of Thouars.

he died on the way, he should not be left behind. On August 30 the expedition sailed from Sandwich—400 ships, carrying 10,000 bowmen and 4,000 lances—but it was destined never to reach the French shore. Five weeks they beat in vain against contrary winds, and September 29 found them still tossing on the waves of the Channel. 'God was for the King of France,' the people said, for no sooner had the baffled expedition disembarked than the wind changed to a favourable quarter. It is said to have lost £900,000. Thouars of course surrendered, and the French cruisers again crossed the sea and pillaged the English coast, and again set fire to Portsmouth.

Fruitless attempt relieve it.

The next year brought fresh disasters, but the decisive failure of the whole war was the last great expedition under the Duke of Lancaster in the autumn of 1373. One of the chief sufferers by the successes of the French was the Duke of Brittany, who had throughout faithfully, if disloyally, supported the English cause. Duguesclin had, by King Charles's orders, invaded Brittany, and reduced almost all the strongholds in the duchy; including the fortresses of *Bretagne Bretonnante*, or western Brittany which had never before been occupied by royal troops. The Duke, who had been expelled from France in 1373, now earnestly entreated the King of England, his father-in-law, to make one final effort for the recovery of the transmarine territories which he had lost. An expedition was planned on a scale of great magnificence. A splendidly equipped army left the English shores, accompanied by the Duke of Brittany and a brilliant array of English barons and knights; and was reinforced on its arrival at Calais by mercenaries from Hainault, Flanders, and Brabant. They marched into France in three great 'battles,' overrunning and wasting Artois, Picardy, the Vermandois,

A.D. 1373. Invasion of France by the Duke of Lancaster.

Champagne, Berri, and Limousin. The Constable and the Royal Dukes of France were in force at Troyes, but they had orders to watch only, and not to attempt to resist the invaders. 'Let them go,' ran the King's instructions. 'By burnings they will not come to your heritage. Though a storm and tempest rage together over a land, they disperse of themselves. So will it be with these English. The latter were now approaching a very different country from the Vermandois, or the borders of the 'noble river Marne,' where the terrified peasantry supplied them with food and forage from their fertile lands—and here they had often 'to go for a week without bread.' Flying detachments of the French had, from the time the expedition started from Calais, been hanging on their flanks, cutting off foragers and stragglers, but always avoiding a collision with the main body. These pitiless pursuers now amounted to 3,000 men, as, with winter coming on, the half-famished English columns entered the sterile and shelterless mountains of Auvergne, where they soon began to suffer the extremities of famine. Their horses were dying of starvation, and out of 30,000 which they had brought with them, but a very few were now alive. As for the men themselves, 'it was a miserable sight,' says Walsingham, 'to see famous and noble soldiers, once delicate and rich in England, without their men or their horses, begging their bread from door to door; nor was there one who would give it them. At last a few spectral fugitives, out of the proud army which had marched from Calais, found shelter within the walls of Bordeaux.

Though this was not the last effort made by England, it was the last which may be called national. Fighting continued to be carried on in Brittany, and reinforcements were sent there from time to time, but with no important results. Pope Gregory XI., ever since his accession in 1370, had used

A Peace with France concluded.

his honest endeavours to bring about a peace; but in those earlier days the humiliations of England and the successes of France were both too incomplete to dispose their soverigns to accept his offers of mediation. Now, however, Edward was glad enough to send ambassadors to meet the Papal nuncios at Bruges; and, after long delays and difficulties on the part of the French, a truce was finally agreed upon, to continue till the last day of June 1376. In the beginning of that year it was again prolonged, but it expired before the death of Edward III.; and his successor found himself compelled, among the first acts of his reign, to provide for the defence of the southern coasts of England against the united fleets of France and Spain.

We have already seen how the great north central kingdom of Spain, delivered from civil strife and foreign intervention, was now peaceably governed by King Henry of Trastamare (page 211). The rest of the Peninsula had been but slightly affected by the great events of the epoch of Edward III.

Internal condition of France.

But it remains to add a few words on the external and internal condition of France at the end of the first half of the "Hundred Years' War." During the fifth decade of Edward's reign the destinies of that kingdom had been in the hands of a prince of no ordinary capacity. It is true that nothing could have seemed more unpromising than his earlier essays at government. He had shown himself selfish, treacherous, and vindictive, a reckless indifferent spectator of the miseries of his country; and had done his best to thwart the patriotic efforts of those who might then have saved France, by reforming the abuses of her administration and reawakening her national energies. But Charles V. had already lived long enough to earn and deserve the epithet of 'the Wise,' and

indeed to accomplish himself, though at a terrible cost of suffering to his country, most of the great and beneficent objects for which Marcel had sacrificed his noble life in vain. He had lived to see repaired many of the disasters of the first two Valois reigns; to see the 'foreigner' checked in Brittany and thrust out of Aquitaine. Europe, pitying the miseries and humiliations of France, had come to sympathise with her ruler in his patient and determined efforts for her restoration to her place among the nations; and the warlike achievements of Duguesclin had done something towards restoring her military prestige. Froissart, at the time of the latest revision of his work, had transferred his literary allegiance from the unsuccessful to the successful camp, and become thoroughly French in tone and sympathies; but seeing, according to his wont, only the external forms and colours of history, he, like the bulk of his contemporaries, altogether failed to comprehend how such great results could be brought about by a king who 'never buckled on a cuirass,' and rarely made a public appearance—a mere 'thinker,' a mysterious recluse, who lived shut up in his Hotel de St. Pol, with his 'physicians, jurists, architects, and astrologers.'

Charles V., and he alone, restored national independence to France, but it was at the cost of civil freedom. The expenses of the war, the enormous ransoms of the prisoners, the stoppage of industry, had all but beggared the Government and the people, and the king was not even then withheld, by the emptiness of his exchequer, from undertaking public works and costly buildings. He completed the fortifications of Paris begun by Marcel, erected churches, bridges, and fortresses; and among them the Bastille of gloomy memory, not indeed as a prison, but in order to keep the citizens of Paris in check.

To meet the difficulties arising from the want of money, Charles, who, since 1369, had governed without a Parlia-

ment, found himself obliged to impose very heavy taxes on all 'commodities,' and especially upon labour. Each family was compelled to purchase, every three months, from the royal stores, a quantity of salt, calculated according to their supposed wants by the officers of the excise, and the fines under this impost were applied to paying the salaries of the public functionaries—a fruitful source of corruption and tyranny. Twelve deniers were levied on each lb. of provisions sold, and this tax was 'farmed' by the creatures of the crown. Fuel was taxed at the rate of six francs a year per fire in the towns, and two francs per fire in the country—an enormous impost, for it will be remembered that a hearth tax of half a franc had been made the pretext for the revolt of Aquitaine. Step by step, these 'extraordinary' were converted into 'ordinary' and permanent 'aids,' and royal collectors were in every case substituted for officers chosen, as heretofore, by the taxpayers themselves. The only consolation the people had was, that the king's hand, if heavy, was strong, and the stern, irresistible regularity of the administration no doubt assisted them to bear burdens under which they would otherwise have succumbed or broken out into open rebellion.

In a word, France under Charles V. had passed through a terrible agony. It is true that at the close of his reign in 1380, her Government was powerful and respected; her foreign enemies had been humiliated, or expelled from her shores, her coinage, and with it her credit, had been restored, and most of the disasters of preceding reigns were already repaired, or in a fair way to reparation. But for all this she had paid a heavy price, in submitting to the establishment of an administrative and fiscal despotism from which she has never since, under any changes of Government, been wholly emancipated.

FIFTH DECADE.—A.D. 1367–1377.

CHAPTER II.

INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF ENGLAND TILL THE DEATH OF THE KING.

ONE turns with a sense of relief from the ineffectual and inglorious efforts made by England to recover her lost position abroad, to the Parliamentary history of a decade which, though overshadowed by the influence of external disasters, was fruitful in wholesome legislation, and marked by the steady growth of constitutional principles. A.D. 1367–1377. Internal Affairs of England.

The first Parliament of importance after that of 1369, which had advised Edward to resume the title of King of France, was held at Westminster in the spring of 1371. The customary opening speech was made on this occasion by William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester, and then Lord Chancellor of England, the last of a long unbroken succession of ecclesiastical Chancellors; for one of the earliest acts of this Parliament was to present a petition praying that;—'whereas the government of the kingdom had long been carried on by men of Holy Church, who are not "justiciable" in all cases, from which great mischiefs and damages have come in times past, and more may happen in time to come; therefore, laymen being able and sufficient, none others shall be made Chancellors, Barons of the Exchequer, or shall be appointed to other great offices of State for the future.' The leader in this anticlerical movement was the Earl of Pembroke, the King's son-in-law, afterwards taken prisoner A.D. 1371. Exclusion of Ecclesiastics from great offices of State.

at Rochelle. That the demand for the exclusion of ecclesiastics was peremptorily urged, and strongly backed by the opinion of the majority, is evidenced by the fact that it was immediately complied with, and Sir Richard Le Scrope was appointed Treasurer in the place of the Bishop of Exeter, and Sir Robert Thorpe Lord Chancellor, to supersede the Bishop of Winchester, though that prelate stood at the time higher than any other subject in the favour and confidence of the King. This measure was shortly afterwards reversed, and ecclesiastical Chancellors continued to be appointed up to the sixteenth century; but its temporary adoption by Parliament enables us to measure the change which had taken place in the relative strength of the constituents of that assembly, and in its bearing with respect to the King and his ministers. But other influences from an opposite quarter contributed to its success. While the independence and authority of the Commons were advancing with rapid strides, a powerful party with a reactionary tendency towards feudalism had made its appearance, at the head of which was John, Duke of Lancaster, to whose hereditary pride the 'professional' arrogance of the bishops and their monopoly of political and Court influence were alike intolerable. The sequel would seem to show that we should be in error in attributing statesmanlike or patriotic views to this prince; but he had the good fortune to enlist on his side the great John Wiclif, who was now beginning the work of his life—the emancipation of his country from ecclesiastical tyranny. One object they certainly had in common, the 'Apostolic poverty' of the clergy. Wiclif's position, which he here took up and vigorously maintained to the end, was this, 'neither prelates nor doctors, priests or deacons, should hold secular offices;' but 'now,' said he, 'benefices, instead of being bestowed

John of Gaunt and Wiclif.

on poor clerks, are heaped on a kitchen clerk, or one wise in building castles or in worldly business,' a manifest allusion to the skill in architecture to which the late Chancellor, William of Wykeham, Bishop of Winchester, originally owed his advancement.

Immediately on the appointment of that prelate's successor, a petition was presented with reference to the inefficiency of the navy, the condition of which was a source of great anxiety to this Parliament and to those of the two following years, in the first of which it was reduced almost to extinction by the disaster at Rochelle. The assembly had no intention of mincing matters, and at once laid the cause of the decline of the Navy plainly before the King. They represented that, in consequence of the withdrawal of the franchises of many seaports, they were ruined and uninhabited, and the shipping nearly annihilated; that merchants were so interfered with in their affairs by various ordinances of the King, that they had no employment for their ships, and consequently hauled them up on the shore to rot; that the masters of the King's ships impressed and took the ablest seamen of other vessels, which were thus left without persons to manage them, so that many of them were lost and their owners ruined. It will be seen from this language that little distinction was thought of between the mercantile and naval marine, and that the efficiency of the one was supposed to stand or fall with that of the other. In the next Parliament the following petition was presented:—'Also pray the Commons, as merchants and mariners of England, that (whereas) twenty years since, and at all times before, the Navy of the kingdom was in all ports and towns on the sea and rivers, so noble and so plentiful that all countries deemed and called our lord the "KING OF THE SEA," . . . . and now that it is so decreased and destroyed by

State of the Navy.

different causes that in case of need there remains hardly enough to defend the country . . . we therefore pray, as a work of charity, a suitable remedy.' Edward answered evasively, as was sometimes his wont, that 'it was the King's pleasure that the Navy should be maintained and kept with the greatest ease and profit that could be.' But a subsidy of no less than £50,000 had already been granted for the reorganisation and maintenance of the fleet and the other defences of the country.

The prosperity of the nation and its financial resources had fallen to a very low ebb at the commencement of this last decade of the reign. Wheat had gone up 100 per cent., and stood at a famine price in the year 1369–70. Amidst the universal depression and distress the Church alone was wealthy and flourishing; and had in fact received during the last seventy-five years large accessions of landed property, illegally, because in violation of the 'Statute of Mortmain,' passed in the reign of Edward I. The Parliament, following up its first victory over the Church (pp. 225–6), determined that the money now voted should be raised by a levy of *22s. 3d.* on every parish of the kingdom, and that the *tax should be taken on all lands which, since the eighteenth year of Edward I., had passed into mortmain.* Now *mortmain,* or 'dead hand,' was an expression used with reference to the property of corporations, which yielded no personal feudal services, was held in perpetual succession, and hitherto exempted from ordinary taxation. The intention of the last clause will therefore be clearly understood if we bear in mind that not only each monastery and chapter, but each bishop and rector, was in himself a corporation. The parochial estimate was of course founded on the supposition that the number of the parishes was about 45,000, the figures in fact given by Higden in his 'Polychronicon,' and the enormous miscalculation here made in a statistical re-

turn of national importance, and apparently of such easy verification, must be taken as a warning to receive with caution all the recorded statistics of these times, and especially those having reference to the amount of the revenues of the Church. When steps were taken to give effect to the order of Parliament, it was found that the parishes were not one-fifth of the number supposed, and the tax had to be increased to 11*6s.* per parish, in order to produce the required sum.

A.D. 1376. The 'Good Parliament.'

The Parliament held in 1376, after an unusual interval of three years,—was characterised by such important, well-intentioned, and upon the whole beneficent legislation, that it afterwards went by the name of the 'Good Parliament.' In order to understand its proceedings it is necessary to bear in mind that the King, though but sixty-four years old, was now prematurely senile and enfeebled. He had lost, five years before, his good, wise, and devoted Queen Philippa, and since her death had yielded himself more and more to the influence of Alice Perrers, a married woman of great wit and beauty who had been Lady of the Bedchamber to the late Queen. Through her means the Duke of Lancaster had contrived, in the King's incapacity to attend to business, so completely to appropriate to himself the royal authority, that he exercised an almost despotic influence in the administration, and appointed all his own creatures to the great offices of State. In Parliament he led a strong party, whose avowed object was the aggrandisement of the aristocratical element, and the curtailment of the privileges already won by the representatives of the people. To this latter, the popular party, which must also be called that of the Opposition, the Prince of Wales lent his name and influence; and how powerful these were may be inferred from the immediate reversal, on his

Influence of the Duke of Lancaster.

death, of many of the salutary measures which the Commons had been enabled by his aid to pass. For the moment the Duke's designs were checkmated. 'He feared,' says the unknown author of a spirited though one-sided contemporary chronicle, 'he feared the majesty of the Prince, whom he knew to favour the knights; but when the Prince died he abused the King's simplicity, and the Prince being dead, the effect of the Parliament died with him.' Sir Peter de la Mare was chosen Vant-parlour, or Speaker, for the Commons were determined to have none of the creatures of the King or the Duke—and he, 'trusting to God and standing together with his followers, before the nobles, whereof the chief was John, Duke of Lancaster, whose doings were always contrary,' declared that 'though the taxes had been heavy on the Commons, now paying fifteenth, otherwhiles ninths and tenths, they would take in good part, nor grieve about it if it had been bestowed upon the King's wars, though scarcely prosperous; but it was evident that neither the King nor the realm had any profit thereby,' and the Commons therefore demanded an open account of income and expenditure. 'After this,' continues the chronicler, 'the judges not having wherewith to answer, held their peace.' But when the Duke heard of the proceedings of the Commons he thought at first to put them down by bluster. 'What,' cried he, 'do these base and ignoble knights attempt? Do they think they be kings or princes of the land? I deem they know not what power I be of. I will therefore in the morning appear unto them so glorious, and will show such power among them, and with such vigour will I terrify them, that neither they nor theirs shall dare henceforth to provoke me to wrath.' But his 'private men' reminded him that 'he knew what helpers these knights had to undershore them, for that they have the favour and love of the lords, and especially

the Lord Edward Prince, your brother, who giveth them his counsel and aid effectually.' But what at last silenced him and brought him to reason was a warning, of which he soon after felt the force, that the Londoners were against him and with the knights, and that if the Commons were molested or interfered with the people of the city would 'attempt all extremity' against him and his friends. The Commons then proceeded with the work of the session. They petitioned that whereas, 'considering the evils of the country through so many wars and other causes, the officers now in the King's service are insufficient for so great a charge,' the royal Council should be 'strengthened by addition thereto of ten or twelve bishops, lords, and others to be constantly at hand; and, seeing that the King had been, by the private advantage of some nearer his person, and others by their collusion, so impoverished that he had been compelled to charge the Commons with subsidy and tallage, notwithstanding the great ransoms of the French and Scotch kings and other prisoners, they therefore prayed him 'that he would do speedy justice on such as should be found guilty of misappropriating public money.' Richard Lyons, a merchant of London and one of the Council, was the first arraigned. He, 'fearing his own skin,' tried to win over the Prince of Wales by sending him by the river a present of 1,000*l.* in a cask, 'as if it had been a barrel of sturgeon;' but the bribe was sent back as it came, and Lyons convicted and sentenced to be imprisoned during the King's pleasure. Lord Latimer was condemned for collusion with Lyons, and the surrender, for bribes, of fortresses in Brittany. Several others were similarly impeached and convicted, but the last and most obnoxious offender was Alice Perrers, against whom a special ordinance was directed, which the

Measures of the 'Good Parliament.'

Lyons.

Alice Perrers.

helpless King was compelled by his now imperious Commons to sign. She had been made an object of public jealousy and dislike by the King's presenting her with the jewels of the late Queen, and permitting her to ride through London on a white horse, attired as 'the Lady of the Sun,' followed by a great retinue of lords and ladies. But the charges now brought against her were of a more serious character. It was stated and proved that she constantly interfered with the due administration of justice, sitting on the bench with the judges, 'and defending and "maintaining" false causes everywhere by unlawful means, to get possessions for her own use; and if in any place she was resisted, she went unto the King, by whose power being presently helped, whether it was right or wrong, she had her desire.' The King therefore ordained that 'no woman shall do so hereafter, and in particular Alice Perrers, under penalty of forfeiting all that Alice Perrers can forfeit, and of being banished out of the realm.'

'Edward, Prince of Aquitaine and Wales,' had been summoned by these titles to the first Parliament which met after his return from France; he seems, however, to have taken little part in politics before the session of 1376. But in this first great constitutional struggle in which the Commons fairly measured their strength against the feudal nobles, the Prince himself, the 'mirror and type' of feudal chivalry, had descended from his vantage ground of birth and privilege; had taken the lead in the noble endeavour to sweep away the abuses and corruptions which had well-nigh ruined his country, and had been repaid by the most unbounded and enthusiastic affection on the part of the people. The work of this portion of his life is, beyond all question, his noblest title to fame, though he has been, and probably always will be, remembered, not as the leader of the first

great popular movement of reform within the walls of Parliament, but as the hero of Creci and Poitiers.

The beneficent influence which he exercised is brought out in strong contrast by the reaction of the following session, when the Duke of Lancaster recovered his predominance on the Prince's death. This event took place in his forty-sixth year, at the Palace of Westminster, to which he had removed in order to be at hand when Parliament was sitting. He was buried in Canterbury Cathedral, where his mailed effigy may still be seen, with the royal fleurs-de-lys of France carved on the surcoat of his armour.

Death of the Black Prince.

The Duke of Lancaster has not escaped suspicion of an intention to supplant Prince Richard, now heir-apparent to the throne. Richard was at this time but ten years old, and the only surviving son of the Black Prince. It is said by the anonymous chronicler who has been so frequently quoted, that 'the Duke, coming in with his malefactors among the knights in Parliament assembled, earnestly desired them that they, associated with the lords and barons, would deliberate who, after the death of the King and the Prince's son, ought to inherit the realm of England; and requested that, after the example of France, they would make a law that no woman should be heir to the kingdom, for he considered the old age of the King, whom death expected in the gates, and the youth of the Prince's son,' &c. Had this proposal been adopted, the Duke, by the exclusion of the female offspring of his elder brother Lionel, who died without male issue in 1368, would have stood next in the succession to Prince Richard; and the chronicler probably only expresses the feeling of the time when he hints that the life of that young Prince would not have stood long in the way. But his ambition to be the first of a royal dynasty was not destined to be gratified, though by a

singular 'irony of events,' within a few months of his own death his son was seated upon Richard's throne. The Commons not only refused to entertain his request, but took the significant step of requesting that the boy Prince might be presented to Parliament, 'in order that the Lords and Commons might see and honour him as the heir-apparent to the crown.'

Prince Richard presented to Parliament as heir to the throne.

At Christmas 1377 King Edward formally invested his grandson his successor.

Of the other matters which occupied the attention of the 'Good Parliament' many were curious or interesting. They petitioned (it must be remembered that 'petition' was then the basis of all legislation) that Parliaments should, 'for the correction of errors and falsities,' be held annually, that 'those persons who put on new taxes by their *demesne* authority, thereby accroaching to themselves royal power, should suffer judgment of life, members, or forfeiture:' demesne authority being that which the lords of manors exercised over the serfs or villains, their tenants at will. This petition shows that the ancient right or power of taxing this class which the lord undoubtedly possessed or exercised was now openly challenged, and regarded as an abuse to be rectified by appeal to Parliament. They further prayed that 'whereas the Priories Alien were filled with Frenchmen, who acted the part of spies, all Frenchmen should, while the war lasted, be banished the kingdom.' The city of London represented that their ancient franchises were invaded by the residence of foreign brokers in the city. The King answered that, if they would put the city under good government, no foreigners should be allowed to act as brokers, or sell by retail in London and its suburbs, save his old friends in need, the merchants of the Hanseatic League. Other petitions had reference to the

obstructions of the navigation of the Thames and the preservation of the fishery: no less than twelve were directed against the encroachments of the Pope and the drain of English money by his Court and his creatures. It was asserted that the taxes raised by the Pope in England amounted to five times the amount of those levied by the King. 'Aliens living in the sinful city of Avignon held and farmed out English preferments; aliens who have never seen, and never will see, their parishes, by which bad Christians Holy Church is more destroyed than by all Jews and Saracens of the world. God gave his sheep to be tended, not to be shaven and shorn.'

But the 'Good Parliament' was no better than its predecessors in abstaining from mischievous interference with trade and contract. The export of woollen yarns for manufacture in Normandy and Lombardy was prohibited, and the cruel and impolitic Statute of Labourers re-enacted, with additional aggravations.

FIFTH DECADE.—A.D. 1367-1377.

CHAPTER III.

FROM THE DEATH OF THE BLACK PRINCE TO THE DEATH OF KING EDWARD III.

THE patriotic hopes of the nation collapsed with the death of the Black Prince. The King, broken down in spirits and worn out before his time by ambitious excitement, affliction, and failure, had become a mere puppet of contending factions. The Duke of Lancaster resumed the virtual government of the country and retained it until the King's death; and his baneful influence may be

traced in the rejection of many of the most reasonable and just of the later petitions of the Commons. He sent the Speaker of the 'Good Parliament' to prison, released Lyons and the other lesser culprits, and permitted the worthless Alice Perrers to regain her place in the King's intimacy. William of Wykeham was obnoxious to the Duke, partly as a bishop, partly because the Black Prince had regarded him with 'special affection and singular delight,' and partly because of the popular part which he had taken in the last Parliament. But he, if any, might have seemed safe out of the reach of the Duke's vindictiveness: he was a man of blameless life, so blameless that one of his contemporaries said that his enemies in attacking him were 'trying to find a knot in a rush.' He was of humble origin, and had risen by his own merits; but there was some ground for Wiclif's innuendo that he owed his advancement in the Church to his architectural skill; for, though born in 1324, he is known only as 'surveyor of the King's works at Windsor' till his ordination, which is believed to have taken place shortly before his first ecclesiastical preferment in 1357. From this date he becomes a prominent figure in the history of his time. He witnessed the ratification of the treaty of Bretigni, became chief of the Privy Council, and in 1366 Bishop of Winchester and Chancellor of England. The charges now brought against him could not be seriously entertained, but the Duke was sufficiently powerful to procure his deprival of his temporalities (or revenues of office) and banishment from within twenty miles of the Court. But though dismissed from the Chancellorship, and thus aggrieved and humiliated, the great bishop lost nothing, even for the time, of his popularity and moral influence, and was pardoned and reinstated at the commencement of the next reign. To that reign the rest of his history

Reaction on death of Black Prince.

William of Wykeham.

belongs, and with it his great foundations of New College at Oxford, and of the first 'public school' at Winchester; an institution which has held its place in the vanguard of progress for 500 years, and contributed perhaps more than any of its younger rivals to smooth the steep and rugged pathway by which poverty must climb the heights of knowledge and distinction.

A Churchman of a very different stamp was the Duke's friend and supporter John Wiclif. Though something very like accident, as has been already stated, had associated the grave, ascetic, and high-souled doctor with the narrow-minded, vicious, and self-seeking feudal aristocrat, Wiclif was not born, and never could have become, a courtier; and circumstances made him for the greater part of his life a wrestler with principalities and powers. One idea they certainly had in common, that the impoverishment of the clergy would be a good thing. John Wiclif.

Much obscurity hangs over Wiclif's early history and circumstances. His birthplace and the date of his birth are both uncertain; we hear of no father or mother, brother, sister, or wife. Tradition indeed tells us that he was born at 'Wye-cliffe,' (the 'Cliff of the River' Swale) near Richmond in Yorkshire,—that he was, in 1348, a student at Oxford,—a well-known figure, walking barefoot in a long gown of red serge,—and that he wrote the 'Last Age of the Church,' under the impressions produced on his mind by the Black Death, which began its ravages in that year. The most recent researches which seem to establish the facts of his identity with the Wycliffe who was Fellow of Merton in 1356, hitherto held, on the authority of Dr. Shirley, to have been a different person, —and of his having been, not only Master (or Warden) of Balliol College and Rector of Fylingham, in 1361, but also Warden of Canterbury Hall in 1365.

The *Mendicant Orders* were the objects of his first

aggression on the spiritual despotisms of his day. In the Church of the Middle Ages the Blessed Virgin and the Saints were the real objects of worship. God the Father was so far withdrawn into the unsearchable distance, and shrouded in clouds of metaphysical speculation, that all ideas of His Fatherhood and His love were lost in those of awe, mystery, or judgment. Christ, indeed, could be approached, but only by favour of His Court above and the officers of His Household below. Of these last, the prelates and the clergy of the Church, the former were themselves almost inaccessible in their worldly greatness. They rivalled, and in many cases surpassed, the hereditary nobles in their wealth and pomp, monopolised the high offices of State, and threw their energies into the struggle of politics rather than the work of the chief pastor and evangelist. The lower clergy aped their superiors as far as their means would allow, and though their office was still held in honour, they had lost the personal respect and confidence of the people by their indolence, sensualism, and venality. Throughout the popular literature of the times the typical priest is represented as a *necessary* evil, but more to be dreaded in a household than a venomous reptile—as a parasite, a hypocrite, a glutton, and the chief and habitual corrupter of female virtue. It was as a counter-influence to the intensely worldly spirit of the secular clergy (as the parish priests were called in contradistinction to the monkish fraternities) that the famous Mendicant Orders of St. Francis and St. Dominic had been established in the preceding century; and their influence had at first been so beneficent that Grosseteste, the great reforming Bishop of Lincoln, was glad to avail himself of their services in England, and lent them his name and authority. The 'Orders' soon began not only to draw to themselves all the ability and fervent devotional feeling of the age, but to offer the most hopeful career to reli-

Mendicant Orders.

gious ambition. Many ecclesiastics already highly placed forsook their dignities, and enrolled themselves among these fraternities in the hope of still loftier advancement, for the Mendicants had supplied many bishops and cardinals and no less than four Popes, in the last fifty years of the thirteenth century. The Orders had become one of the great powers of the earth; were deeply tainted with the all-prevailing worldliness of the times, and had utterly lost the spirit, though they still affected the externals, of poverty. Wiclif's soul rebelled against the patent fact that the kingdom of Christ had virtually become the kingdom of this world, and he threw himself with all the passionate earnestness of his nature into the task of purifying, elevating, and spiritualising the religion of his day, and bringing back a corrupt Church to something like the ideal set forth in the New Testament. He published a little book called the 'Poor Caitiff,' a collection of tracts the purpose of which, he says, was 'to teach simple men and women the way to heaven.' He established a fraternity of poor priests who were to go about preaching and constantly mingling with the poor; an institution combining the discipline and ready obedience of a religious order with the individual liberty of action and free development of personal gifts which characterised the first lay preachers under John Wesley. These poor priests, with their fresh and hearty teaching, their unaffected poverty, and their friendly intercourse with the people in their perpetual itineracy, were no doubt the chief instruments in the rapid and extraordinary diffusion of the new doctrine. One of Wiclif's bitterest enemies tells us, 'You cannot travel anywhere in England, but of every two men you meet in the road one of them would be a Lollard.' This was the name given to the followers of Wiclif, from a Bohemian word, *lollen*, to sing (or 'lull,' as we have it

Wiclif's first movement.

in our '*lullaby*'). People laughed at them at first as harmless fanatics, but before five-and-twenty years were passed they had begun to be martyrs, and we find, a century further on, a very grave jest at their expense in Erasmus, who expresses a hope that either Lollardism 'or persecution would stop before winter, for it raised the price of firewood.' To attack the Mendicants was indeed to disturb a hornets' nest, a step on which no timid or worldly-wise man would have ventured. They were in the habit of selling 'shares' in masses for the dead and indulgences and absolutions for the living, as Tetzel did a century and a half later in Luther's time. 'Thus,' Wiclif said, 'they made property in ghostly goods, where no property may be, and professed to have no property in worldly goods, where alone property is lawful.' The beginning of his strife with the Mendicants dates from the time of his residence at Oxford, which University had suffered severely from their insidious encroachments. They had stirred up the scholars to sedition, and seduced them from their colleges into their own monasteries; and the number of students was enormously reduced (it is said from thirty thousand to six thousand) by the dread of sending children to a University where they were thus liable to be kidnapped. 'Freres,' says Wiclif, 'drawen children fro Christ's religion into their private order by hypocrisie and lesings . . . . steling children fro fader and moder.'

But his next appearance was on a wider stage. In 1366 he found himself embroiled in a controversy involving the very principles of Papal authority in England. Owing to the non-fulfilment of the conditions of the peace of Bretigni, a new war was inevitable, and, in fact, imminent; and at this juncture Pope Urban V., in the interests of his French master, put forward a demand

Wiclif defends the course taken by Parliament.

for the arrears of the Papal tribute of 1,000 marks a year, which King John had covenanted to pay in acknowledgment of his holding England and Ireland as fiefs under Innocent III. The claim for tribute had been admitted by the feebler Plantagenet kings, but repudiated by the first and third Edwards, and Parliament was now summoned to consider the Pope's demand for the arrears of thirty-three years. It is not too much to say that at this time the predominant feeling in Parliament was hatred to the Pope, and their re-enactment of the first statute of *præmunire* a short time previously, placing provisors out of the protection of the law, ought to have convinced him that they were hardly in a mood to accede to any Papal demand, least of all to one the mention of which recalled to mind the period of their country's greatest degradation. They unanimously resolved that, King John having no power to give away his kingdom without the concurrence of Parliament, the claim fell to the ground; and they promised to stand loyally by the King in his resistance thereto. Wiclif was publicly invited to defend the course taken in the refusal of the Papal 'tribute,' and startled the orthodox world by laying down the novel, but when once stated, incontrovertible, doctrine that King and Parliament are supreme in all causes over ecclesiastics as well as over laymen. In the year 1368 Wiclif published his treatise 'De Diminio Divino,' in the preface of which he unconsciously fixes the date of the true commencement of the Reformation by declaring that henceforth he would dedicate his time exclusively to theology. This resolution, to which he finally adhered, was probably not taken till he had despaired of Church reform in its political and social aspect. When Wiclif called upon the Pope and the bishops to lay aside their purple, to live frugally, watch and pray, and 'do the work of an evangelist,' he

carried with him the whole heart of the laity; just as, in fact, Grosseteste had done, a century before, when he denounced the worldliness of the clergy; but it must be borne in mind, in estimating the boldness and originality of Wiclif's work, that up to this time the *doctrine* of the Church had remained for centuries unchallenged, and was received with unquestioning faith by the mass of the people. That doctrine it was the object of his life henceforward to purify and reinvigorate, by bringing it back to the standard of primitive simplicity; a task which he set about in the spirit of an earnest and courageous, but, it must be confessed, a somewhat ruthless controversialist.

This is not the place to discuss the directly religious teaching of Wiclif, which indeed belongs properly to the next reign; suffice it to say, in the words of a recent biographer, that 'there is scarcely any doctrine now prominently set forth by the Church of England which was not insisted upon by him; scarcely an error against which the Church of England practically protests, which Wiclif does not treat in a manner which anticipates and justifies our modern objections.' His positive doctrines may be summed up in the assertion of personal responsibility, the supremacy of the Scriptures and salvation by faith; his negative teaching in the denial of the necessity of priestly mediation, and of all the superstitions which cluster round it, especially that of a miraculous change effected by consecration in the elements of the Lord's Supper. It was the promulgation of this last 'heresy' which united King, Lords, and Commons with the exasperated hierarchy against him. He was summoned before Convocation at Oxford, and solemnly banished from the University, upon which he retired finally to his living at Lutterworth, devoting himself, before

Wiclif's teaching.

He is expelled from Oxford.

and after the first attack of that paralysis of which he afterwards died, to writing, to pastoral work, and to his translation of the Bible. Of that work a clerical contemporary of his thus writes: 'This Master John Wyclyffe hath translated the Bible out of Latin into English, and thus laid it more open to the laity and to women that can read, than it had formerly been to the most learned of the clergy; and in this way the Gospel pearl is cast abroad and trodden underfoot of swine.' In such language as this prejudice and bigotry could speak of an effort which may be said, without exaggeration, to have for ever 'rolled back the stone from the well of the water of life.' Wiclif died in 1384, and was buried in peace in his own churchyard; but thirty years later the Council of Constance ordered his remains to be dug up and thrown far away out of consecrated ground. His body was burned, and the ashes flung into the Swift, which runs by the village of Lutterworth. 'The brook,' says Fuller, 'did convey his ashes to the Avon; Avon into Severn; Severn into the narrow seas; they into the main ocean; and thus the ashes of Wiclif were an emblem of his doctrine, which is now dispersed all the world over.'

Dies, is buried, and exhumed.

These events of course took place beyond the limits assigned to this narrative; but Wiclif is the chief figure in a stormy scene which closes the political history of the reign of Edward III. In February 1377 he was summoned to appear before Courtenay, the Bishop of London. The charges then made against him were of a purely political character, the object of the prosecution being to assail the Duke of Lancaster through his principal supporter; and, as Dr. Shirley says, 'to proclaim to the world that the principles which the Duke was putting into practice against the Church were subversive not only of that institution, but

A.D. 1377. Wiclif's trial.

of society itself.' The trial took place in that noble Gothic church which, till the Great Fire in 1666, stood upon the site of the present St. Paul's. Barons, prelates, and doctors from all parts of England had taken their seats, when a tumultuous mob rushed in and filled every corner of the building before Wiclif's arrival, for the trial excited the most passionate interest, and the popular feeling, for some unexplained reason, ran strongly against the Reformer. When he took his place before his judges the whole of the circle were seated, and he left standing. The Earl Marshal, Lord Percy, who had come with the Duke to support Wiclif, ordered a seat to be given him. The Bishop of London refused, and a fierce dispute arose between him and the Duke, the former retaining his temper and dignity, the Duke 'turning red with rage,' and muttering 'that he would drag the Bishop out of the church by the hair of his head.' The Londoners, overhearing the threat, pressed tumultuously and menacingly round their Bishop, and the assembly broke up in the utmost disorder. The following day the excitement increased. The mob rushed to the Duke's Palace of the Savoy, beating to death by the way an unfortunate priest who had incurred their wrath by stigmatizing the Duke's prisoner, Sir Peter de la Mare, as a traitor. The Duke himself was absent, so the rioters contented themselves with hanging up his arms reversed, like those of a traitor, in the principal streets. He meanwhile had fled to Kennington, and sheltered himself under the popularity of the Princess of Wales, who, as the widow of the people's friend, the Black Prince, was dear to the heart of every citizen.

King Edward breathed his last on June 21, in his palace at Shene, in the sixty-sixth year of his age and the fifty-first of his reign. His 'jubilee' had been celebrated a short time previously, and a

Death of Edward III.

general pardon granted to all offenders, with the express exception of William of Wykeham. It is difficult to read without emotion the brief description handed down to us of the death-bed of this magnificent prince, long honoured as the mirror of chivalry, and envied as the favourite of fortune. Alice Perrers remained by his bedside till he began to sink, but, a few moments before he breathed his last, she drew the jewelled ring from his unresisting finger and left the palace. His attendants had dispersed through the rooms in search of plunder, and he was left alone to die, when a priest entered unbidden, and held up the crucifix before his fast-glazing eyes. The King summoned strength to thank him, took the crucifix in his hands, kissed it, wept, and expired.

CONCLUDING CHAPTER.

PART I.—CHARACTER OF EDWARD III. AND OF HIS REIGN.

IT is no light task to attempt to form a due estimate of the character of King Edward III. He and his gallant son have so long been recognised heroes of English romance, that it is far easier to join in the chorus of admiration than to criticise or faintly praise.

Edward III., from an external point of view, undoubtedly ranked as the foremost man of his time, and always bore himself worthily of the great personage that he was. Of middle stature, but gracefully and strongly built, he had a winning address

Character of Edward III.

and commanding countenance, a 'godlike face,' the old chronicler says. His training was well adapted to fit him for his exalted place, but if we are to believe that he received an admirable education, the expression must be taken relatively; for in the fourteenth century, and long after, the 'culture' of a gentleman consisted chiefly in the acquisition of such accomplishments as breaking a spear and holding a hawk gracefully—riding, dancing, dressing, and carving to perfection—but 'book-learning was left to louts.' It would be a bold assertion that he could read, write, or speak English. In his youth the language of the Court and the feudal castle was exclusively Norman-French—that is to say, a French *patois* only half naturalised in a foreign country, and, in fact, a corruption of a corruption; 'of which speeche,' said Chaucer, 'the Frenchmen have as good a fantasye as we have in hearing of Frenchemennes Englyshe.' He was doubtless acquainted with Latin or the barbarous jargon which went by the name (a great deal of it being no better than English words with Latin terminations); the use of which was so general, that not only were the records and other State papers written therein, but accounts were kept and political songs composed in Latin. As for the origin and history of this language, the poet Gower, one of the most learned men of the age, conjectures that Latin was invented by the old prophetess Carmens; but that Aristarchus, Donatus, and Didymus regulated its syntax and prosody. The highest geographical authority of the fourteenth and following century, Higden, author of its 'Polychronicon,' was not acquainted with the fact that the earth is a globe; and, like Herodotus, peopled its unexplored regions with dragons, satyrs, and devils. Sir John Mandeville, who had been himself a great traveller, tells of Ethiopians with only one foot, but that as large as a parasol, 'gyants twenty-eight feet long, and foul and

evil women, who have precious stones for eyes, and slay with beholding like a basilisk.'

All the best learning and talent of the age were engrossed and absorbed in the childish, unprofitable subtleties of *scholastic* speculation, which was then believed to be the highest form of intellectual exercise, and about which a few words must be said.

At the latter end of the middle ages very few Europeans, even among those reputed good scholars, were acquainted with the Greek language. In the twelfth century, however, the writings of Aristotle became known in the West, at third hand, through Latin translations of Arabic versions. A mixture of Arabian and Greek philosophy rapidly interpenetrated the whole of the theology of Europe, and Greek and Arabian terms and dialectics (or methods of reasoning) became the forms in which all theological discussion was carried on. In this treadmill of human thought and ingenuity, whole lives were spent and whole libraries composed, the single result of which labour has been to fill posterity with barren amazement,—an amazement such as we feel on beholding the Pyramids,—at the stupendous waste of power for no discoverable use.

The 'Philosophy of the Schoolmen.'

Edward was indeed more of a soldier than a scholar, and also more of a soldier than of a general. The King himself, or his marshals (for he understood the royal art of choosing good men), made undoubtedly a happy selection of the ground on which to fight the battle of Creci, and skilfully disposed the handful of men who were to stand up against the great army of France. Even that victorious struggle was an example not so much of successful generalship as of the latent capabilities of brave men, animated, not depressed, by the sense of danger;—and facing overwhelming odds with the deliberate fury of some wild hunted animal who will no longer withdraw before his

pursuers, but turns to bay at last, armed with the tenfold strength of rage and despair, to sell his life as dearly as he can. In the battle off Sluys Edward fought with the 'ferocious courage of the house of Anjou,' but his campaigns were in most instances unprofitable and inglorious: there is little to show that he possessed the higher qualities of a warrior, and to attempt to rank him with the greatest strategists and captains of all time is to provoke an idle controversy. As a soldier and a legislator he 'looms large' between Edward II. and Richard II., but seems a man of ordinary stature when measured with the great first Edward or the greater first William. He can hardly be called a great statesman, but in the absence of any minister of conspicuous ability, he seems to gather up in himself all the powers of the administration, and to be the sole exponent of the national will. His reign presents a marked contrast to those of his successors, in which the King is lost, or distinguishable only by crown and sceptre, amid a turbulent crowd of actors. From the day when, as yet a boy, he dragged down Mortimer from his pride of place, Edward III. was 'master of his own house,' and no subject dared to approach the throne but with bowed head and bended knee.

He understood better perhaps than any other sovereign of his dynasty the great importance of keeping on good terms with his people, and almost in every successive Parliament he had the credit of making concessions to the nation; but he was, in all probability, quite as arbitrary as the most arbitrary of his predecessors. The very fact that the Great Charter, and the Charter providing against the extension of the 'forests,' were reenacted and confirmed twelve times in his reign, is sufficient evidence that they were infringed upon at least an equal number of times. Over and over again he pledged

himself to observe the statute of Edward I., 'de tallagio non concedendo,' and not to impose arbitrary taxes on the people, but always with some reservation which enabled him, without actual breach of faith, to reimpose them under the plea of necessity. He pursued the objects of his ambition with a keenness and intensity of purpose which often made him forgetful of his kingly obligations as well as of the sufferings of his people.

He was prudent as well as bold, but his prudence had a short range, and hardly amounted, like his grandfather's, to sagacity, while his measures, dealing with the symptoms rather than with the disease, are wanting in the character of breadth and permanence. To assert that Edward III. did not act upon the true principles of political and social science is only to say in other words that he was not centuries in advance of his time; but it is difficult altogether to acquit him of the charge (which indeed he more than once cynically admitted) of having taken measures to increase the revenue of the Crown at the expense of the interests of the nation at large.

He was a genuine Englishman in his rough and ready, and often incoherent, policy; in his contempt for foreigners and his audacious confidence in himself and his countrymen; in his love of manly exertion; his personal pride and popular sympathies, and his freedom from lasting enmity and vindictiveness. He might almost be called a typical Englishman, were it not for a certain love of frippery, fine clothes, and scenic effect, which he probably inherited with his French blood. That his reign was unusually free from scandals—to which, indeed, the connexion of his dotage with Alice Perrers is the chief exception—is perhaps mainly due to the admirable choice of a wife made for him by his execrable mother; for there is little to induce us to believe that, with all his ceremonial devoutness, he aimed

at higher purity of life than his contemporaries, in an age when all things were condoned to all men, and indeed to all women, so long as they kept on good terms with Holy Church. He was, it may readily be granted, the embodiment of the popular ideal of chivalry in his time, but that ideal was very far removed from the ideal set forth by romance in King Arthur and Sir Galahad. We cannot, indeed, too warmly admire the nobler features of mediæval chivalry, its discipline, valour, courtesy, devotion, and respect for the weaker sex; but the annals of the time prove only too clearly and constantly that these characteristics were not incompatible with selfishness, impurity, greed, class-pride, and vindictiveness—and cruelty, or that heartless levity which is the worst form of cruelty, to the individual woman.

Before the end of Edward III.'s reign chivalry had begun to show its first symptoms of decline. The marked success of the cautious and unchivalrous tactics which Charles the Wise had adopted at the suggestion of Du-

Decay of chivalry.

guesclin; the introduction of new methods of fighting, which deprived highly-trained horsemen of their former superiority and comparative invulnerability in battle, had all tended to bring it into discredit, but it was not doomed to extinction for many a long day. Chaucer indeed, in the 'Rhyme of Sir Topaz,' makes open fun of the chivalric histories, and almost anticipates 'Don Quixote;' but it was the courtiers of Queen Elizabeth who first exchanged the two-handed cross-hilted sword for the rapier, and it was another fifty years before chivalry received its death-blow, amidst the general laughter of mankind, in the immortal novel of Cervantes. Though chivalry had unquestionably a large share in the formation of much that is admirable in our national English habits of thought and action, we need waste no regrets over its decline and fall. All that was

independent of accident and circumstance, all that was really worth preserving in that splendid but imperfect type of character, survives amongst us still, adapted to the altered conditions of the times, in the ideal of a 'gentleman.'

Feudalism and chivalry declined together. The cramped and narrow theory of tenure by military service, in feudal times the keystone of the social system, was giving way before a multitude of new and complicated reciprocal relations, which sprang up with increasing wealth and intelligence on the one hand, and the growing necessity of finding a broader basis for authority on the other. European society was being reconstructed out of old and simpler elements, which had been breaking up and were crumbling away; the Catholic Church itself, hitherto the type of compactness and immobility, was beginning to feel the influences of this remarkable period of transition, in the attacks made by bolder spirits on her doctrine and discipline.

Decay of feudalism.

The chief interest of the age of Edward III. does not lie upon the surface, and its secret is altogether missed by the contemporary chronicler Froissart, to whom we owe such a minute and spirited, but superficial, picture of the reign. Its real glories spring not from its gigantic military efforts, which only wasted the resources of the country, and, even when crowned with almost miraculous success, produced absolutely no abiding results; but from its calamities and disasters—from the Black Death, which emancipated the English serf,—from the loss of Aquitaine, which at once and for ever stamped its insular and independent character upon the English nation and monarchy,—from the enormous drain of money, which constantly brought the King face to face with his people, and taught

Characteristics of the reign of Edward III.

him and his nobles that if a nation is to put forth its united strength in the hour of need, its rulers must learn to take account of the wrongs of the many as well as of the rights of the few. It is a striking illustration of what has been called 'the irony of human events,' that while, from the point of view of the principal actors in the scene, nothing remains of the great war for the crown of France but the memory of dazzling and unsubstantial triumphs; its indirect and unforeseen effects,—the concessions which it was the means of wringing from royal prerogative and feudal tyranny,—are felt among us to this day, and remain as real, fruitful, and unalienable accessions to the ever-widening empire of human freedom. The interest of the history of the fourteenth century is not to be compared with the wonderful awakening of Europe, as from a frost-bound winter sleep, in the thirteenth, but it possesses a peculiar interest and importance of its own. It will be indeed remembered by our countrymen chiefly as the age in which their forefathers proved that Englishmen were the hardest hitters in Europe, and won victory after victory against desperate odds. It is in vain for cold reason to contend against the spell of the names of Creci and Poitiers; they will for ever stir the English heart like the blast of a trumpet or the rustling of a consecrated banner; but these battles are not, after all, the true titles of the age to honour. Searching deeper down, we shall find, and thankfully admit, that the century was one not of conquest, but of transition, development, emancipation,—and characterised by a silent and gradual contraction of the area of privilege, and a corresponding enlargement of the area of liberty.

PART II.—SOCIAL ASPECTS OF THE REIGN.

ON looking into the social condition of the period, the first fact which strikes us is that the elements of society were in those days so simple and so few.

There was first the sovereign, nominally subject to the laws, but invested with ill-defined hereditary prerogatives, scarcely diminished from those first yielded to William the Norman by a conquered and prostrate country. There was the powerful aristocratic class, beginning with the kinsmen and connexions of the King and ending with the greater barons, who all held their fiefs or estates by barony, or 'in chief,' from the Crown. These constituted 'the great men of the land,' '*les grauntz de la terre*,' as they are constantly called, and like the bishops ('*les prelatz*'), who also held directly under the Crown, and certain mitred abbots of monasteries, had the *right* of being summoned personally to Parliament. There is a good deal of obscurity still attaching to the position of the 'lesser barons,' as those lords were called who could command the services of a number of knights holding fiefs under them; but who, by reason of more recent creation, alienation, forfeiture, or subdivision of estates, were not in possession of ancient hereditary privileges. These the King appears to have summoned to Parliament or not, at his discretion. Next in rank came the knights bannerets, who, though not ennobled, were, like the barons, in possession of a plurality of 'knights' fees,' could bring vassal knights into the field; and were consequently entitled to cut off the long streamer of the 'pennon' of the knight bachelor, and

The King.

The Nobles.

The Knights.

thus convert it into the square 'banner,' as John of Chandos did for the first time on the field of Navarrete. To be a 'knight' even of the lowest class, was to be 'gentle,' and placed a man on a footing of equality in arms with the highest noble of the land. But this theory had to a great extent given way in this transition period, and enactments were not unfrequently made, or renewed, compelling all persons in possession of a certain income to take up the order of knighthood; partly with a view of securing the fees for the King's exchequer, and partly to enable him to command their military services with greater speed and certainty. Still the knights, whatever their original status, looked upon themselves as belonging to the aristocracy, and shrank from contamination with the trading classes, who were often their superiors in wealth, education, and intelligence. It was only in the Parliamentary struggle, as has so often happened in practical England, that the strong class-feeling yielded to considerations of common political interest; for nothing short of a close union of forces between the knights of the shires and the mercantile representatives of the towns could have enabled them to maintain the 'war of independence' of the fourteenth century against the nobles and the Crown. The great English 'middle class' was the growth of a later age, but no doubt the nucleus of it was created by the stimulus given to trade and commerce in the reign of Edward III. His constant prohibition and removal of prohibitions on the export of wool, though contrary to all sound principles of political economy, were one of the chief causes which led to a third, and this time a friendly, Continental invasion of Britain; bearing in some of its aspects no less importantly on her future than that of the English or of the Normans. For the French Flemish weavers, who could not carry on their finer manufactures without a

The Traders.

regular supply of English wool, came over in large numbers and settled on the eastern coasts. They were constantly in want of fresh 'hands,' and as they offered high wages, a continual immigration took place from all parts of England to the Norfolk towns, where the weavers chiefly established themselves. It became their interest to harbour and conceal the fugitive serfs or villains, who fled from the forced labour which they were compelled to render at home to their lords; for by a residence of a year and a day in any town, a serf acquired the right of disposing of his labour when and where he pleased. This district of England was already in constant communication with the northern ports of Europe, for Yarmouth, Lynn, and Blakeney were already famous emporiums for the 'Baltic trade,' just then beginning to become a highly important interest. Fish being a necessary of life in Roman Catholic countries, the comparative failure of the fisheries which had taken place on the northern coasts of Europe had induced numbers of traders from the Hanse towns in the north of Germany to settle on the coast of Norfolk; in order to export red herrings and other dried fish for the wants of the faithful in their own old Continental homes. The ships which conveyed the herrings thither, brought back supplies of tallow and other Baltic produce, especially furs—then worn by all persons of a certain rank in England—from the unexplored forests of Russia. These traders were known by the name of 'Easterlings,' and an interesting evidence, perhaps of the character of their trading, certainly of the esteem in which their money was held, has come down to us in the familiar word '*sterling*,' which we apply to coin of known and unquestioned purity, and which is now, in fact, appropriated in common usage, to our English coin. In order to realise the close ties which united King Edward with Van Arteveldt and the burgo-

masters of the Hanse towns, we have only to remember that the eastern counties were then swarming with traders and workers, much in the same way as the north-western are at present. The great fair at Stourbridge, now scarcely remembered on the spot, was a world-famous gathering in those days, and rivalled the great fair of Novgorod in Russia. It lasted three weeks in every September. Temporary streets and bazaars were erected for the sale of all then known articles of commerce. The neighbouring harbours were crammed with the ships of every nation, from which had disembarked the Venetians and Genoese, with the produce of the far East and their own country, velvets and silks and armour; the Spaniards, with war-horses and iron; the Norwegians, with their pitch; the Gascons, with their wine; the Easterlings, with their tallow and furs. This tide of importation from abroad was met by another setting from the interior of England—salt from Worcestershire, lead from Derbyshire; dairy and farm produce brought by the bailiff from many a near and distant manor—and the famous English woolpacks which manufacturers from north and south of Europe would bid against each other to secure. So prized were sheep of the English stock that it was forbidden by law to sell or export rams for the improvement of foreign breeds; but there is a tradition that a few of these animals, surreptitiously conveyed over sea, were the ancestors of the famous Spanish merinos. The exportation of iron, which used to be smelted in Sussex, was forbidden by Act of Parliament in 1354.

Next in the social scale to the opulent and the enterprising trader came the sturdy yeomen, or tenant farmers, who had for generations held their land in free *socage*, as it was called, either by a fixed rent, or by service to their lord; and formed the strength

The Yeomen.

of the English army as long-bowmen and men-at-arms. Below these came the class of villains, or serfs, who could not quit the manor on which they were born, were liable to forced labour, had to pay a fine on marriage or on sending a child to school, or virtually on any other occasion which the lord might make a pretext for attacking their little hoards. In time of war the serf might be impressed, though only a boy of sixteen or a man—in those days an elderly man—of fifty or sixty, and sent into battle armed only with a quilted jacket, skull-cap, knife, and lance, to stand up against the 'handy stroaks' of knights and men-at-arms carrying mail and battle-axe. All that they had to expect was, in case of their side being victorious, to rush in and stab and rifle the fallen foe; or, in case of defeat, to be slaughtered without mercy, adding, perhaps, a cipher to the sum total of the slain. Their cottages were miserable huts made of wattle plastered with mud; often standing below the level of the soil, with one apartment only, and no chimneys, windows, or ventilation. Their habits were filthy. Scurvy and leprosy made fearful ravages among them, partly on account of the total neglect of the commonest precautions for health and cleanliness, and partly on account of their having to go for months together without fresh meat or vegetables. It was the custom of the times, on the 10th of November in each year, to kill off all the cattle not wanted for stock, and to salt down the meat for winter use. They had, of course, no potatoes, nor any other esculent roots except onions, no vegetables except cabbage. Wheat was upon the whole remarkably cheap, if we consider the wretched system of agriculture in those days; a penny would purchase six pounds. Meat was also cheap; neither beef nor mutton cost more than a farthing a pound; butter and cheese about a half-

The Villains.

Food.

penny. All this while the lowest rate of wages, even before the rise occasioned by the Black Death, was threepence a day. Wiclif says that the poor in his time lived longer and better than the rich ('melius et diutius vivunt quoad corpus'); and the Spanish ambassador of Philip II., two centuries later, writes thus to his master;—these peasants live like hogs, but they fare as well as the King.' Their dress consisted of a rough pair of shoes, frequently of untanned leather,—a pair of galligaskins, breeches of leather, and a frock of 'russet,' or undyed wool, for they were forbidden by law to wear a more costly material. The dress of the middle class was of much the same make but of finer texture, for it was in this particular that the gradations of rank were statutably marked. Its cut may be seen any day in the alderman's gown, in the dress of the scholars of Christ's Hospital, and in Occleve's well-known portrait of the poet Chaucer. The nobles, however, vied with each other in the splendour, costliness, and extravagance of their clothing. Both sexes wore in Edward III.'s reign a tight-fitting vest, called a '*cotte-hardie*,' from the sleeves of which hung long slips of cloth, and over this a large flowing mantle, buttoned at the shoulder, of scarlet or some equally brilliant colour, the edges 'dagged' (or jagged), and cut in the form of leaves. The cotte-hardie was gorgeously embroidered, and the whole of the costume was of the most costly and showy materials that could be procured. It is said that feathers were then first worn in hats. They had small hoods tied under the chin and set with gold, silver, and precious stones; 'liripipes,' or tippets, hung round the neck and down to the feet, all 'dagged.' The hose were 'pied,' or parti-coloured, 'their shoes and pattens sandalled and pinked more than a finger long, bending upwards, which they called crakowes, resembling the claws of birds, and

Clothing.

looped up to the knees with chains of gold and silver.' Ladies' hair was gathered up and confined in a band of gold thread, and there was as much freedom in the shape and arrangement of the mass, as—prevails at the present time. The head was, however, in those days enveloped in a kerchief (*couvre chef*), the neck swathed in a napkin. Chaucer's description of the Canterbury Pilgrims is a repertory of information in the dress of his day. He says of the Wife of Bath, supposed to be a well-dressed woman:

> Her couerchiefs were full fine of ground;
> I doorste swere they weyeden a pound,
> That on the Sonday were on hire hede.
> Hire hosen weren of fine scarlet rede,
> Full streyte-y-tied. . . .
> Upon an ambler esily she sat,
> Y-wimpled well, and on hire hede a hat
> As brode as is a bokelor or a targe;
> A fote-mantel about her hippes large,
> And on hire feet a pair of sporres sharpe.

The great art of the age was architecture. Monasteries and abbeys were no longer built, for the taste of the times had changed; but manors, hospitals, castles, schools, and colleges were then erected which modern architects can only feebly imitate. The manor house, in which the bailiff frequently lived in his lord's absence, may be taken as the typical dwelling of the period, for the feudal castle differed from it only in a multiplication of the same simple arrangement of elements. It consisted of a central building, with an enclosure surrounded by a ditch and palings. The building itself contained a large hall running up to the open tiling of the roof; in which the family and servants ate their meals and lived during the day, and the latter slept by night, either on the rush-strewn floor or on

Architecture.

benches round the walls, the garment of the day serving for the coverlet at night. A door at one end of the hall opened into the chamber or sleeping-room of the females of the family, and another door at the other end into the stable. In smaller houses of this class, cooking, like all other domestic processes, went on in the hall, but in those of more pretension a kitchen took the place of the stable, and a 'soler,' or upper chamber, was built over the sleeping-apartment, approached most commonly by an external staircase; and towards the end of the eleventh century a parloir (or parlour), so called from being the room for 'interviews,' was added. The hall was *the* room of the house, and, in addition to the uses already described, it was the place in which small offences were tried and justice administered. The manor court, presided over by the seneschal, or steward, in the absence of the lord, was not unlike the local magistracy of our day. These courts exercised police powers in cases of trespass, evasion of duty, false weights, and breaches of the peace; but many of them possessed what was known as the 'high jurisdiction,' 'the right of fossa and furca'—that is, of hanging male and drowning female criminals. The door of the hall generally stood open, in token of hospitality, but it was a breach of good manners for the passer-by to look in. The hall had no chimneys, and the smoke found its way out as it could; nor was this so difficult as it might seem, for the roof was very imperfectly fitted, and the openings through which light was admitted were either unprotected, or filled up with a cross-barred grating by day and a curtain or shutter by night; glass for windows was unknown except in the palaces of kings, and rarely found even in these. The furniture was of the simplest kind; the seats were either slabs in recesses of the wall, or boards

Domestic arrangements.

laid upon trestles. The table, at which in the humbler manors the whole household took their meals together, was constructed in the same manner, and removed when not wanted. In the houses of a higher class there was generally a daïs, or slightly raised platform, at the upper end, on which stood a permanent, or 'dormant,' table, for the use of the family and honoured guests. Two or more 'perches' or wooden frames were fixed to the wall, and on one of them sat the 'domestic birds, hawks, falcons, &c.,' and on the other were suspended articles of clothing of various kinds, and frequently armour. Another common article of furniture was the dresser, a series of shelves for exhibiting the plate at banquets, frequently so high as to require steps to be provided to enable the servants to reach the upper shelves.

Our ancestors in the fourteenth century kept early hours. It was the custom to rise with the sun, and we read of a party who are ridiculed as having overslept themselves when found in bed at six. The usual dinner-hour was nine in the morning. The family were summoned to it by the blowing of horns, and the first step after assembling in the hall for meals, was washing the hands, for which purpose each guest was served with a basin, ewer, and towel. It was not till after the guests were seated round the table that the cloth was laid; on it were then set the saltcellars, knives, occasionally spoons, and bread, and cups of wine. There were no forks nor plates. The fingers were thought to answer all the purposes of the former, and instead of the latter, each *couple* of guests had between them a large tranchoir (or trencher); that is to say, a thick flat slice of bread of second quality, on which a portion of fish or meat sufficient for two was laid, and on which it was carved, the gravy, as a rule, running through upon the table-cloth. As soon as the course was finished, the trenchers were

Meals.

thrown into the alms-basket for the use of the poor. At the conclusion of the meal the table was removed, basins and ewers were a second time supplied for washing the hands, which doubtless was by this time again necessary, and cups of wine were handed round to the guests, still sitting as at dinner, after which the minstrels were introduced. The minstrels, or 'jongleurs' (so called from a corruption of 'jougleurs,' joculatores, our 'jugglers'), were an important class in the Middle Ages, and an indispensable element at a festival. They led a life of perpetual wandering, and were always welcome, partly for their art's sake, and partly for the sake of the news which they brought, for news was then a scarce commodity. If the after-dinner guests were in a serious mood, the jongleurs would sing old romances of love and chivalry; if they found the company mirthfully disposed, they sang satirical and political songs, or related amusing stories, or exhibited feats of tumbling and sleight of hand; and their tales, songs, and performances were often of a character which painfully illustrates the coarse licentiousness at this time pervading all classes of society. The fourteenth century was not a busy or industrious age—people who lived in the country were in no hurry to break up the social gathering; and 'after the meal,' says a contemporary romance, 'they then go to play as each likes best, either in forests or on rivers (that is, *hawking*, for water-fowl, such as the heron and the teal, were the chief 'quarry,' or prey, of the hawk),—or in amusements of other kinds . . . . chess, tables and dice.' The evening meal was at five o'clock, after which, we are told, the family usually went to bed, for artificial light was bad and dear. Wax was used only in palaces and churches, and even tallow was twopence per pound, an enormous price. A candle offered at the shrine of a saint was in

The Jongleurs.

Candles and fuel.

the truest sense an oblation, 'for it cost the bearer the sacrifice of a rare personal pleasure.' Wood fires were almost universal; charcoal indeed was occasionally used in the dwellings of the rich, but coal appears to have been employed for smelting purposes only. Reading was no common accomplishment, and books—being, of course, still written with the hand—were few, and beyond the reach of all but the richest; and the chief intellectual entertainment of well-to-do persons was to listen to the songs or recitations of the professional jongleurs, or those of amateurs belonging to their own class who were well versed in such lore.

PART III.—LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE.

As has been already said in other terms, Latin was the language of business, and French the language of society. In the earlier part of the reign of Edward III. graver works were composed in Latin, but all the higher literature was in French, and in subject and form, a close imitation of French originals. The chivalrous romance and the legends of martyrs, and the 'fabliaux,' or rhyming tales, had given way to the now universal passion for allegorical poetry, in which the characters introduced were impersonations of virtues and vices; such as was the 'Romance of the Rose,' by the translation of which Chaucer first gained the ear of the people. Up to the beginning of the fourteenth century the supremacy of the French language in England had been almost unchallenged. Its introduction was by no means due to the Norman Conquest, though that event undoubtedly gave it a new impulse,—for it had been the Court language of Edward the Confessor. It is said that William the Conqueror tried to learn English, but his successors made no such attempt. The Trouvères who sang in the rugged

Langue d'Oil found especial encouragement at Court from the two queens of Henry I., and during the long succession of the earlier Angevin sovereigns, who were to all intents and purposes Frenchmen, the royal influence was favourable to the growth of French. The two Eleanors whom Henry II. and Henry III. brought from the south of France, carried with them the soft Provençal, the Langue d'Oc, of the Troubadours, and in the reign of the last-named sovereign, such was the undisguised preference of the Court for everything French, and such the consequent influx of adventurers of that nation, that the ancient English element in the people seemed a second time threatened with helotry or extinction.

English survives;

But all this time the English language had survived. The Saxon Chronicle comes to an abrupt conclusion in the reign of King Stephen, but about a century and a half before the reign of Edward III. the vernacular again crops up, mingling in grotesque incongruity with the Latin of the 'Mystery' plays; the less dignified scenes of which were sometimes in the vulgar tongue, while the more stately 'spectacle' continued to be given in Latin. It was, and always had been, the language of the common people, and had consequently undergone a deterioration in purity and structure analogous to that of the *Lingua Romana rustica* spoken in the Roman provinces under the Empire; in which process prepositions took the place of inflections for case, and auxiliaries the place of inflection for voice and tense. It is possible that, to complete the parallel, there existed, side by side with the degraded Saxon, a literary and inflected English language; but, be this as it may, the time was now come for its revival as a national tongue, and the speech of our forefathers, as well as their ecclesiastical and civil polity, was developing and renovating influences of the

Becomes a national tongue.

to feel the

age. It is not a little remarkable that the language and the free institutions of England should have thus grown up together. The name of Wiclif is closely associated with both movements, and though his fame as the 'day star of the Reformation' has thrown somewhat into the shade his literary achievements, it must never be forgotten that his influence as a reformer was mainly due to his English translation of the Scriptures; and that in his controversial attack upon the strongholds of superstition and priestly monopoly he had, as it were, to forge the weapon with which he fought. But it was not till the century was entering its fourth quarter, and the reign of Edward III. was drawing to a close, that Wiclif's English writings became generally known; and long before that time we have abundant proof that English was taking the place of French, wrestling with it, and overcoming it. Higden, already mentioned as a 'literary man' of this century, tells us, writing before the beginning of the French war, that in his time boys at school, 'against the usage and manner of all other nations, be compelled to leave their own language, and to construe their Latin lessons and their things into French.' His translator Trevisa, who lived at the latter end of Edward the Third's reign, in commenting on this passage, tells us that it was not so then: 'in all the gramer scoles children leveth Frensche, and lerneth an Englyshe.' In the memorable year 1362 it was decreed, in a statute itself worded in French, that henceforth the proceedings in the law courts should be conducted in English, the reason given being that 'the French tongue is much unknown in England.' Three years later the Lord Chancellor opened Parliament in an English speech. But in its growth and development language follows laws of its own, irrespective of artificial stimulants or checks. During the long struggle against the domination of foreigners in England

which took place in the reign of Henry III., a complete fusion had been effected between the Norman and English elements of the race. The far-sighted measures of Simon de Montfort had united the nobles with the commonalty, by giving them each a common voice in legislation; and the great French war in Edward III.'s reign, by the self-reliance which it engendered and the antipathies which it fostered, stamped for ever upon the English nation its insular, united, and independent character. It began to be felt, not consciously perhaps, but instinctively, that the time was come for England to have a language and a literature of her own, and Chaucer, like other men of genius, seized upon and gave expression to the feeling of the age. In his 'Testament of Love' he thus 'apologises' for writing in English:—'Let, then, clerkes enditen in Latin, and let Frenchemen in their Frenche also enditen their quaint terms, for it is kindely to their mouths, but let us show our fantasyes in such wordes as wee learneden of our dames tongue.' But some twenty years before the appearance of Chaucer's great work, 'The Canterbury Tales,' 'The Vision of Piers Ploughman' had become the delight of the English people. This may fairly be called the first genuine English poem, for we had before it only the dreary versified histories of Wace and Robert of Gloucester, more prosy than prose itself, and Norman rather than English. The 'Vision' dates from the year 1365. Tradition gives the author a name, Robert Langland, and a birthplace, Cleobury Mortimer in Shropshire; and he is also said on the same doubtful authority to have been a secular priest, or, as we should say, a country parson. He wrote in the words and idioms and the 'alliterative' measures of the old Anglo-Saxon poetry, perhaps still familiar to the people's ear, but in the plan of his poem he had adopted the allegorical im-

Langland.

personations of the Trouvères. Alliteration, or the stringing together of words or syllables beginning with the same letter, is his only poetical artifice; as for rhyme, he discards it altogether. In tone and sentiment and independence of thought, as well as in diction and subject-matter, this extraordinary work is thoroughly English, and breathes the fresh, bracing air of the Malvern Hills among which the Ploughman fell asleep to dream his Dream. He is always in deep, not to say in grim, earnest; he finds the times out of joint, full of contrasts and contradictions,—

> And Marvellously Me Met, as I May you tell,
> All the Wealth of the World and its Woe both;—

the world lying in wickedness, misery, and corruption, and the Church, which should be the salt of the earth, among its chief corrupters, more worldly than the world itself. It was he who commenced the great revolt; in asserting the supremacy of reason, conscience, and Holy Scripture as the guides of faith and conduct, he undermines the sacerdotal claim to the direction of the inner life of man. Penances and Pilgrimages are nothing worth in comparison of Charity, which, with St. Paul, he held to be greater than faith, and an image of the mercy of God, of which he says,

> 'All the Wickedness of the World that Man Might Work or think,
> Is no More to the Mercy of God than in the sea a Glede' (spark).

Poverty he loves, but it is honest, hard-working poverty, not the ostentatious, professional poverty of the Mendicants. Yet he is no precursor or forestaller of Wiclif in Wiclif's greatest work, for he never attacks the doctrine of Papacy, but only its social and political abuses :—

> God amend the Pope, that Pilleth holy Church,
> And Claimeth by force to be King and Keeper over Christendom.

A striking contrast to this half-mythical and impersonal Langland was Geoffrey Chaucer, the other and greater poet of the age. Passing his days in the thick of the interests, the business, and the pleasures of the world, ambassador, courtier, traveller, place-hunter; tried by all vicissitudes of fortune, now living in splendour, now hard pinched for his daily bread, now in disgrace and in prison, now again restored to royal favour—he 'saw life' in all its many-sided and many-hued variety, and reproduced his impressions in undying colours in the picture-gallery of 'The Canterbury Tales.' There is a tradition that Chaucer, Froissart, Boccaccio, and Petrarch met together at Milan, at the marriage of Prince Lionel with the daughter of the great Vesconti. Be this as it may, Chaucer was familiar with the writings of the two Italians, and also with the 'Vision' of Dante, who had died some sixty years before our English poet wrote his great work; and he was well acquainted with all the local and vernacular literatures which were everywhere springing up in the languages derived from the romance Latin. He borrowed from the Norman 'romaunts,' from the ancient classics, from the popular legends; but his real sympathy is with the spirit and genius of his own times, and in those portions of his works which are of most enduring interest he drew upon his own varied experience for his materials. Thus, though 'The Canterbury Tales' first appeared some years after the death of Edward III., they may be taken as illustrating the social life of the latter half of the fourteenth century; and there is hardly one of its phases, hardly an age or condition, which Chaucer has not fixed for ever in that comedy of manners. In his power of creating a character at once the type of a class, and a living, breathing individual; in the variety of his gifts, in the pathos, the humour, the brightness, the fan-

Chaucer.

cifulness, the profusion of his genius, he is second to one only of his countrymen, and no unworthy precursor of the golden age of English poetry;—being, indeed, in the words of Tennyson,—

> the first warbler, whose sweet breath
> Preluded those melodious bursts, which fill
> The spacious times of great Elizabeth
> With sounds that echo still.

As the plays of Shakespeare are to 'The Canterbury Tales,' so is the prose of Milton and Bolingbroke to the rugged and half-formed, but vigorous, massive, and pathetic language of Wiclif. It might be hard to name two men more unlike in work, character, and circumstances than the contemporary Fathers of English poetry and English prose, but there is one point at which the two are in sympathy, one *ideal* at least is common to them both. The picture which Chaucer has left us of the Parish Priest as he should be, entitles the poet to claim spiritual kindred with the great reformer. That portrait might have been drawn to the life from Wiclif himself; not the stormy Wiclif of his early controversial days, but the lowly, subdued, and tender pastor of the village flock of Lutterworth.

ENGLISH CAMPAIGNS IN FRANCE

London, Longmans & Co

INDEX.

AACHEN, 50, 106
Abbeville, 107, 108
Acts of Parliament (*see* Parliament)
Adrianople, 48
Adriatic, 5, 45
Africa, 45
Agace, Gobin, 107
Agenois, 33, 38, 62, 214
Aiguillon, 102, 120
Airaines, 107
Aix-la-Chapelle (*see* Aachen)
Albret, Lord of, 208
Alençon, Counts of, 38, 112
Alfonso X., 150, 189
Alfonso XI., 189
Alliances, 4, 42, 53, 59, 64, 90, 97, 217
Alliteration, 265
Almohades, 44
Alps, 47, 50
America, 49
Amiens, 37, 115
Amurath, 4, 47
Andalusians, 210
Angoulême, 100, 101, 102, 212
Anjou, county of, 183
Anjou, Duke of, 184, 186, 210, 214
Anjou, family of, 45, 77, 248, 264
Annan, 27
Antwerp, 63, 64, 66
Aquitaine, 33, 35, 37, 38, 41, 57, 62, 71, 97, 99, 187, 197, 208, 216
Aquitaine, Duke of, 44, 187, 216
Arabic, 247
Aragon, 44, 86, 192, 195
Archers, 25, 30, 68, 69, 78, 93, 106-110, 112, 113, 117, 119, 161, 163, 195, 257
Archipelago, 45
Architecture, 97, 259
Armour, 10, 122, 159, 163, 213, 255, 256, 261
Aristotle, 247
Arms of England, 37, 70, 212
Arms of France, 70, 71, 212, 232
Army, English, 29, 69, 256
Army, French, 171
Arques, 79
Arteveldt, 53, 54, 59, 70, 98, 99, 245
Arthur, King, 132, 250
Artois, county of, 153, 165, 220, 153
Artois, Robert of, 53, 68, 77, 90, 94
Arundel, Earl of, 110, 113
Asia Minor, 45
Astrology, 69
Athens, 137
Athens, Duke of, 164
Auberoche, 101
Auckland, Bishop's, 118
Audley, Sir James, 168
Auray, 94, 188
Austria, 50, 51
Austria, Duke of, 51, 8
Auvergne, 159, 208, 221
Avalon, Isle of, 142
Avignon, 40, 46, 58, 96, 135, 152, 173, 185, 190, 235
Avon, River, 243
Azincourt, 156

BACH, Anthony, 77
Bachelors, Knights, 55
Bacon, Roger, 122
Balearic Isles, 195
Balliol College, 237

BAL

Balliol, Edward, 13, 24-32, 86, 154
Balliol, John, 14
Baltic, 5, 48, 49, 253
Bannerets, 253
Bannockburn, 8, 31
Barcelona, 190
Barnes, 215
Barons, 17, 22, 24, 27, 57, 69, 150, 253
Bavaria, 50, 51
Bayonne, 41, 100, 218
Beaumont, Lord, 24
Beauvais, 107
Beggars, 142, 143
Benedict XII., 40, 46, 58, 63, 65, 67, 70, 71
Bergerac, 100, 159
Bergues, 122
Berkeley Castle, 15
Berkeley, Sir T., 21
Berri, county of, 221
Berri, Duke of, 186, 214
Berwick, 29, 30, 148, 153-5
Beverley, 9
Bible, 243, 265
Bishops, 12, 14, 17, 27, 31, 58, 69, 82, 84, 96, 226, 238, 253
Black Agnes, 87
Black Death, 2, 134-45, 237, 251, 258
Black Prince (*see* Edward B.P.)
Black Sea, 48
Blakeney, 255
Blanch of Bourbon, 150, 189
Blanch of Lancaster, 193
Blanche Tâche, 107
Blankenberg, 78
Blois, Charles of (*see* Charles of Blois)
Blois, county of, 159, 188
Boccaccio, 136, 268
Bohemia, 4
Bohemia, Charles and John of (*see* under Charles and John)
Bois de Vincennes, 39
Bolingbroke, 268
Books, 61, 263
Bordeaux, 62, 99, 100, 120, 151, 155-9, 168, 191, 214, 219, 221
Borrowing Money, 13, 64, 76
Bouchier, Sir R., 82
Bourbon, Duke of, 185
Brabant, 50, 51, 53, 55, 63, 220
Brabant, Duke of, 35, 55, 67, 70, 99
Brandenburg, Margrave of, 67
Brest, 89

CHÂ

Bretigni, peace of, 183, 187, 189, 208, 236
Brigands, 132 (and *see* Companies)
Bristol, 141-8
Brittany, 44, 88-92, 94, 155, 183, 212, 220, 221
Brittany, Duke of, 212, 220
Brokers, 234
Bruce, David, 15, 24, 26, 68, 87, 88, 118, 129, 154, 155, 170, 186, 206, 217
Bruce, Edward, 203
Bruce, Robert, 8, 9, 13, 14
Bruges, 98, 99, 222
Brussels, 55, 69
Buch, Captal de, 160, 168, 178, 188, 195, 212, 219
Bulgaria, 47
Burgos, 196
Burgundy, 44
Burgundy, Duke of, 44, 213
Burnt Candlemas, 153

CADSAND, 59, 93
Caen, 103, 117
Calais, 2, 69, 115, 116, 122, 128, 153, 181, 186, 198, 213, 221
Calverly, 190, 212
Cambrai, 66, 67, 70, 87, 93
Cambridge, Earl of, 216, 218
Camoens, 191
Campaigning, English, 64, 69, 155, 181
Campaigning, French, 69, 213, 220
Campaigning, Scotch, 9, 29, 154
Cannon, 110, 123
Canon Law, 46
Canterbury Cathedral, 82, 233
Canterbury Tales, 259, 266, 268
Capet, Hugh, 35, 44
Cardinals, 58, 61, 62, 63, 129, 161
Carinthia, 50, 67
Carlisle, 9
Carving, 93, 246, 261
Cassel, 36, 79
Castile, 45, 150, 189, 211
Castle Rising, 22
Castro, Fernando de, 191, 211
Cathay, 135
Cerda, de la, 150, 189
Cervantes, 250
Cervolles, A. de, 173, 185
Challenges, 8, 11, 33, 54, 67, 80, 107, 124, 153, 195
Châlons, 178

CHÂ

Châlons, Bishop of, 162
Champagne, 44
Chancellors, 81, 85, 226
Chandos, John of, 110, 150, 164-8, 192, 195, 208, 210, 212, 213, 242
Channel, English, 57, 63, 81, 122, 199, 206, 220
Channel Islands, 35, 42
Chantonceaux, 91
Chargny, de, 133, 163, 165
Charlemagne, 50, 193
Charles IV. of France, 4, 10, 33, 34
Charles V. (the Wise) of France, previously Duke of Normandy, and first Dauphin, 158, 162, 164, 168, 171, 173, 174, 188, 192, 208, 217
Charles, King of Navarre, 34, 72, 152, 157, 158, 173, 174, 178, 188, 192, 217
Charles of Blois, 89, 90, 93, 120, 151, 173, 183, 188
Charles of Bohemia, 4, 106, 114, 130
Charles of Spain, 149-153
Charter, Great, 7, 82, 84, 248
Charter of the Forests, 248
Chartres, 159, 183
Chatillon, 182
Chaucer, 246, 250, 258, 266-8
Chauvigny, 160
Cherbourg, 152-3
Chester, 75
Chimneys, 245, 260
Chivalry, 1, 5, 8, 61, 80, 123, 169, 188, 191, 193, 249, 250
Church, 40, 139, 146, 228, 235, 238, 242, 250, 251
Church, last age of, 237
Cinque Ports, 55, 74
Clarence, Lionel, Duke of, 118, 205, 209, 233
Class Parliaments, 74
Clement VI., 36, 94-6, 129, 135, 140, 152
Cleobury Mortimer, 266
Clergy, 27, 57, 62, 75, 131, 238
Clermont, 177
Coal, 129, 199, 263
Coblentz, 66
Cocherel, 188
Colloquies, Parliamentary, 74
Columbus, 49
Commerce, 5, 42, 57, 71, 73, 129, 198, 254
Commons, 14, 21, 27, 57, 60, 61, 72, 73, 95, 117, 146, 226, 230, 231, 234, 266

DUK

Companies, 171-3, 180, 181, 185, 190, 192, 207, 210
Connaught, 203
Constance of Castile, 191, 192, 218
Constantinople, 48, 135
Cordova, 45
Corfe Castle, 18
Cornwall, 141
Cornwall, Duke of (*see* Edward, Black Prince)
Corsica, 45
Cortes, 151
Corvara, 65
Coupland, Sir John, 119, 169
Courtenay, Bishop, 243
Creci, 2, 68. Battle of, 109-16, 132, 167, 252
Croxton, Abbey of, 141
Crusades, 39, 44, 45, 47, 49
Curia Romana, 46, 190 (Papal Court)
Customs, 14, 57
Cyprus, 45, 136
Cyprus, King of, 206
Cyrus, 11
Czechs, 50

DANTE, 268
Danube, River, 50
Dauphin, 158
David II. of Scotland, 24, 26, 88, 118, 170, 206, 217
De Burghs, 203, 205
Decades, 2
Decameron, 136
Demesne, 234
Denmark, 49
Derby, 256
Derby, Earl of (*see* Lancaster, Duke of)
Despensers, 7, 19
Devon, 141
Diet, 66, 106
Dieu et mon droit, 70
Dominio Divino, de, 241
Dordogne, River, 100, 159
Dorset, 140
Douglas, Sir Archibald, 29
Douglas, Sir J., 9, 10, 11, 12, 25
Douglas, Sir W. (Knight of Liddesdale), 87, 118
Dowry, 7, 209
Drapers, 200
Dress, 130, 150, 246, 258
Dukedom, 153

DUN

Dunbar, 31, 87
Dunfermline, 25
Dupplin Moor, 26
Durham, 9, 10, 75
Dwellings, 61, 257, 258–60

EARN, River, 25
Easterlings, 255–6
Eastern Empire, 5, 47
Eating, 260-1
Ebro, River, 194
Eclipse, 88
Edinburgh, 31, 80, 88, 154
Education, 246, 253, 265
Edward, Confessor, 263
Edward I., 3, 14, 22, 29, 73, 228, 248
Edward II., 7, 8, 15, 33, 203, 204, 248
Edward III., his accession, 6; coronation, 7; war with Scots, 8–13; admits independence of Scotland, 14; marriage, 16; birth of son and heir, 19; begins to govern, 20; invades Scotland, 29; claims French crown, 33; does homage for Guienne, 37; negotiations with Flanders and Brabant, 53; his *first* invasion of France, 63; confers with the emperor, 66; his *second* invasion of France, 77; wins battle of Sluys, 78; impeaches Stratford, 82; deceives parliament, 84; invades Brittany, 94; builds Round Table at Windsor, 97; confers with Flemings, 98; his *third* invasion of France, 103; fights battle of Creci, 109; takes Calais, 126; repeoples it, 128; refuses Imperial crown, 130; establishes Order of the Garter, 132; repels attempt to recover Calais, 133; wins the sea-fight of L'Espagnols sur mer, 149; invades Scotland, 154; his reception of King John of France, 169; his *fourth* invasion of France, 181; peace of Bretigni, 183; sanctions Spanish expedition of the Black Prince, 191; splendour of his reign, 129, 206 his *last* invasion of France, 219; death, 244; character, 35, 76, 169, 245; policy (*see* Policy, English)
Edward, Black Prince (Duke of Cornwall), 16, 19, 62, 63, 70, 99, 102, 109, 113, 116, 133, 134, 149, 151,

FYL

155–70, 171, 184, 187, 191–7, 207, 212, 214, 216, 229–33
Edward of Angoulême, 187
Egide, Hans, 49
Egypt, 136
Elbe, River, 50
Eleanor of Aquitaine, 181, 183
Eleanor of Castile, 189
Eleanor of England, 38
Elizabeth, Queen, 250, 269
Eltham, 38
Emperor, 4, 46, 50, 86
Empire, 50, 51, 64, 130
— Eastern, (see Eastern Empire)
English language, 202, 246, 263, 264
Epoch, character of, 3, 251
Ethiopians, 246
Evreux, 152, 174, 188

FABLIAUX, 263
Famosus Libellus, 83
Feathers, 116, 246
Fécamp, Abbot of, 36
Ferdinand de la Cerda, 150
Ferdinand III. (Saint), 45
Feudalism, 5, 38, 67, 70, 79, 226, 257
Fez, 45
Fiefs, 4, 27, 36, 37, 39, 41, 44, 51, 54, 66, 241
Fish, 145, 148, 154, 182, 200, 235, 255
Flagellants, 139
Fleet, English, 41, 42, 56, 59, 63, 73, 74, 77, 116, 122, 153, 154, 206, 207, 227
Fleet, French, 32, 42, 63, 116, 123, 220, 225
Fleet, Spanish, 149, 150, 153, 218, 225
Flemings, 36, 52–4, 59, 70–2, 79, 98, 99, 104, 121, 183, 254
Florence, 13, 47
Food, 228, 245
Forestallers, 147
Forth, Frith of, 31
France, 3, 6, 16, 33, 44, 51, 132, 134, 179, 185, 222
Franks, empire of, 50
Frederick of Austria, 51
French language, 246, 263
Froissart, 68, 91, 125, 133, 163, 167, 168, 251, 268
Fuel, 262
Fuller, 215, 243
Furniture, 260
Furs, 49, 131, 174, 256
Fylingham, 237

GAB

GABELLE, 157
Galeazzo Visconti, 184
Games, 23, 186, 201, 205, 256, 262
Garter, Order of, 131
Gascons, 99, 155, 166, 168, 190, 193, 256
Gaunt, John of, 72, 193, 213, 216, 218, 220, 226, 230, 235, 243
Geneva, Lake of, 51
Genoese, 41, 63, 77, 78, 91, 108, 112, 123, 167, 256
George III., 212
George IV., 8
Germany, 4, 51, 64, 139
Ghent, 52, 71, 98
Ghibellines, 46
Gibraltar, Straits of, 45
Gideon, 12
Glass, 260
Glastonbury, 142
Gloucester, Robert of, 266
Godemar du Fay, 108
Goldsmith, 205
Goldsmiths, 200
Gossipred, 148, 204
Gournay, 21
Gower, 246
Granada, 39. 45, 190, 191
Gravelines, 122
Greece, 4
Greek fire, 159
Greek language, 247
Greenland, 49, 135
Gregory VII., 65
Gregory XI., 221
Grievances, redress of, 28, 74, 75, 85, 96, 117, 233
Grossetcste, Bishop of, 238, 242
Guelders, Count of, 55
Guelfs, 46
Guernsey, 94
Guesclin, Du, 187, 190, 194, 196, 210, 214, 219, 250
Guienne (*see* Aquitaine)
Guilds, 53, 200
Guipuzcoa, 192
Gunpowder, 123 (*see* also Cannon)
Guy de Penthièvre, 89
Guzman, Leonora de, 189

HAINAULT, Countess of, 80
Hainault, William of, 15
Hainault, William of (son of above), 68

IRE

Hainault, Sir John of, 14, 105, 113
Halidon Hill, 30, 31
Halle, 64
Hannekin, 151
Hanseatic League, 51, 234
Hanseatic steelyard, 13
Hanse Towns, 256
Harcourt, Count of, 157
Harcourt, Geoffrey de, 103, 107, 157, 158
Harcourt, Godfrey de, 158
Hawking, 121, 169, 182, 199, 246, 261–2
Haydon, 10
Hearth tax, 207, 214
Helots, 204, 264
Hennebon, 87–93
Henry III. of England, 14, 266
Henry IV. of England, 25, 147
Henry V. of England, 117, 156, 185
Henry IV. of Germany, 65
Henry VII. of Germany, 51
Henry of Trastamare, 190, 193, 194, 210, 211, 218
Henry the Fowler, 50
Herodotus, 11, 246
Herrings, 148, 255
Herse (Harrow), 155
Hertford Castle, 170
Higden, 228, 246, 265
Holland, 41
Homage, 27, 31, 36, 37, 39, 71, 80, 90, 95, 183
Horses, 76, 98, 110, 131, 162, 183, 199, 221, 257
Hostages, 155, 184, 192
Hu and crie, 23
Hungary, 4, 48, 139
Hunting, 169, 182

ICELAND, 49
Ich dien, 116
Iñez, 191
Innocent III., 241
Innocent VI., 173, 183, 185
Interdict, 58, 65, 140
Invasions, English, of Scotland, 24, 25, 29, 32, 153, 154; of France, 62, 68, 77, 94, 151, 155, 181, 218, 220
Invasions, French, 41, 62, 114, 116, 212, 214, 222
Invasions, Scotch, 9, 80, 118, 141, 153
Ireland, 6, 29, 44, 148, 203–5

IRI

Irish, 30
Iron, 255
Isabel of Castile, 192, 211
Isabel of France, 184
Isabel of France, Queen of Edward II., 6-8, 15, 16, 19–22, 33-5, 249
Islip, Archbishop, 201
Italy, 46

JACQUERIE, 2, 172, 176
James, the Conqueror, 44
Janissaries, 4
Jeanne de Montfort (*see* Montfort, Countess of)
Jeanne de Penthièvre, 89, 120, 188
Jehan le bel V., 120, 126
Jersey, 73
Jews, 138, 171, 176, 224
Joan of England (sister of Edward III.), 15, 27
Joan of England (daughter of Edward III.), 54, 121, 141, 189
Joan of Navarre, 34, 72
John II. of France (previously Duke of Normandy), 44, 91, 100, 101, 121, 149, 152, 156, 161, 165, 169, 171, 184, 206
John, King of Bohemia, 67, 68, 105, 114, 116
John, King of England, 183, 241
John of Norwich, 102
John of Vienne, 125
John XXII. (Pope), 15, 17, 18, 24, 28, 29, 35, 39-41, 46, 65
Jongleurs, 174, 262
Jousts, 22, 97
Jubilee, 244
Judges, 22, 85, 145, 226, 230
Juliers, Margrave of, 55, 67
Justice, administration of, 22, 75, 260
Justices of the Peace, 23, 128

KEEPERS of the Peace, 22, 23, 128
Kenilworth Castle, 6
Kennington, 244
Kent, Earl of, 17
Kent, Fair Maid of, 187, 244
Kilkenny, Statute of, 202, 205
Kinghorn, 25
Knights and knighthood, 3, 10, 27, 57, 69, 74, 97, 150, 169, 230, 253

LOU

Knights of the Sword, 48
Knolles, Sir Robert, 172, 188, 193, 214
Knyghton, 140
Koran, 45

LABOURERS, 97, 134, 142, 235, 246
La Hogue, 103, 120
Lancaster, Duke of (previously John of Gaunt), (*see* Gaunt, John)
Lancaster, Duke of (Wryneck), (previously Earl of Derby and Earl of Lancaster), 7, 8, 17, 81, 99, 101, 120, 122, 152, 158, 184, 198, 193
Lancaster, H. Earl of, 8, 17
Lancaster, Thomas, Earl of, 7
Lanercost, Abbey of, 118
Langland, Robert, 62, 254
Langue d' Oc, 173
Languedoc, 100, 186, 210
Langue d' Oil, 156, 171, 264
Latimer, Lord, 231
Latin, 246, 263
Laws, 75, 76, 177, 200, 206, 233
Lawyers, 147
Leif, 49
Leon, Bishop of, 92
Leon, Henry of, 91
Leon, Kingdom of, 45
Leprosy, 9, 257
Le Scrope, Sir R., 226
L'Espagnols sur mer, 149
Lewis of Bavaria, 4, 51, 55, 58, 64, 86, 105, 130
Lewis of Spain, 91, 94, 149
Life, shortness of, 16
Limoges, 214-6
Literature, 5, 263
Lithuania, 48
Livonia, 48
Loire, River, 91, 159, 172, 183
Lollards, 239
Lombard Street, 13
Lombardy, 47, 51, 235
London, 23, 63, 118, 140, 142, 153, 231, 234
Lord of the Sea, 42, 149, 227
Lorraine, 50
Lothians, 153
Louis, Count of Flanders, 36, 52, 59, 70, 98, 113, 121
Louis, Count of Flanders (Le Mâle), 70, 105, 121

Louis the Great of Hungary, 4, 48, 50
Louis IX. (Saint) of France (*see* French Genealogy)
Louis X. (Hutin), 33, 44, 72, 152
Louis XI., 34
Louvain, 55
Louviers, 104
Louvre, 91, 95, 158, 175, 179
Low Countries, 67
Lucretius, 137
Luther, 240
Lutterworth, 242, 243, 269
Lynn, 255
Lyons, 40
Lyons, Richard, 231, 236

MAGYARS, 48
Mahometans, 44, 45, 211
Maie, River, 109, 110
Maine, 183
Majorca, 86
Malestroit, 94
Maletolt, 73, 128, 19
Maltravers, 21
Malvern Hills, 267
Mandeville, 246
Manny, Sir W., 59, 93, 94, 100, 121, 125, 182
Mar, Earl of, 26, 29
Marcel, Etienne, 173-81
March, Countess of, 87
March, Earl of, 26, 87
Mare, Peter de la, 230, 236
Marne, River, 221
Marriages, 14, 15, 54, 58, 70, 121, 148, 204, 256
Marshalsea, 18
Mary, Queen, 129
Massagetæ, 11
Maupertuis, plains of, 160
Meat, 12, 257
Meaux, 177
Mechlin, 55, 67
Mediterranean, 45, 47, 50, 155
Mendicants, 237, 267
Merchants of the Staple, 148
Merinos, 256
Merlin, 110
Merton College, 237
Miauson, River, 160
Milan, 184, 185, 209, 268
Milton, 193, 269
Moguls, 46

Money, 13, 55, 62, 64, 69, 98, 173, 184, 199, 237
Montacute, Lord, 19, 39, 55, 95
Montfort, Countess of, 91-4, 110, 151
Montfort, Simon de, 266
Montfort, Earl of, 92, 95, 155, 183, 188
Montfort, Earl of (son of the above) (*see* Brittany, Duke of)
Montlel, Castle of, 211
Montreuil, 37
Montserrat, Marquis of, 185
Moors, 26, 39, 44, 190, 211
Moravia, 50
Morbecq, Denys de, 165, 16
Morgarten, 52
Morley, 77, 79
Mortimer, 6, 7, 8, 13, 15, 19 22, 25, 37, 39
Mortimer, Geoffrey, 19
Mortmain, 228
Moscow, 4, 48
Moselle, 50
Muhldorf, 51
Murray, Sir A., 32, 87
Murray, Randolph, Earl of, 9, 10, 25
Murray, Randolph, Earl of (second son of the former), 28, 118
Mysteries, 200
Mystery plays, 264

NAJARILLA, River, 194
Namur, Count of, 68
Nantes, 89-91, 94
Naples, 22
Navarre, 44, 152
Navarre, King Consort of, 68, 152
Navarrete, 194-7
Navy (*see* Fleet)
Neville's Cross, 118, 129, 154
Newcastle, 9, 29, 88
New College, 237
Newtown the Bold, 116
Norfolk, 255
Norfolk, Earl of, 17
Norman conquest, 153, 254, 263
Norman language, 235, 266
Normandy, 41, 44, 77, 103, 152-9, 183, 235
Normandy, Duke of (*see* John II. of France, and Charles V. of France)
Normandy, Ordinance of, 102, 117
Northampton, Earl of, 100, 110, 113

NOR

Northmen, 49
Norway, 41, 49, 256
Norwich, 140
Norwich, John of, 101, 102
Nottingham, 19
Novgorod, 48, 256
Nursing, 148

OCCLEVE, 258
Ockham, William of, 64
Octroi, 157
Ogle, 21
Oisemont, 107
O'Neills, 203
Ordinances, 202
Orewell, 63, 78
Oriflamme, 112, 114, 124, 165
Orleans, Duke of, 163, 184, 186
Otho, 51
Ottomans, 47
Owen of Wales, 219
Oxford, 102, 237, 240, 242

PADILLA, Maria de, 189
Pale, 203
Palestine, 39
Paris, 53, 69, 90-1, 153, 173, 175, 182, 209, 214
Parishes, 228
Parish Priest, 269
Parliament, 14, 17, 18, 19, 21, 27, 28, 35, 37, 38, 40, 73, 84, 95, 130, 142, 153, 157, 198, 212, 225 (the Good), 229, 241, 253
Parliamentum Indoctum, 147
Pastoureaux, 176
Peace, the King's, 7, 23
Peace, treaties of, 8, 14, 33, 40, 70, 81, 88, 94, 130, 155, 168, 181, 183, 221
Pedro the Cruel, 150, 189, 195, 211
Peers, 14, 21, 84, 85
Peers of France, 35, 90
Peloponnesus, 48
Pembroke, Earl of, 216, 218
Percy, Lord, 244
Perigord, 100
Perigord, Cardinal, 161
Perrers, Alice, 229, 231, 236, 245, 249
Perth, 25, 26, 87, 88
Petitions, 76, 234

PYR

Petrarch, 136, 181, 268
Philip, Duke of Burgundy, 213
Philip II. (Augustus) of France, 183
Philip III. of France, 16
Philip IV. of France, 33, 152, 157
Philip V. of France, 33
Philip VI. of Valois, King of France, 28, 34, 35, 39, 41, 54, 56, 62, 66, 68, 69, 73, 89, 105, 118, 149, 152, 158
Philip II. of Spain, 258
Philip (le Hardi), son of King John of France, 165
Philip of Navarre, 158, 174, 188
Philippa, Queen of England, 15, 72, 93, 102, 119, 121, 126, 229, 249
Picard, Sir H., 186
Picardy, 153, 220
Piers Ploughman (*see* Langland)
Piracy, 47, 125, 126
Pitch, 256
Poaching, 154
Poissy, 105, 106
Poitiers, 2, Battle of, 156-68, 197, 219, 252
Poland, 4, 48
Policy, English, 14, 20, 26, 35, 39, 42, 58, 96, 99, 103, 129, 152, 247
Policy, French, 3, 4, 41, 73, 80, 97, 117, 195
Policy, German, 4, 64
Policy, Scotch, 30, 32
Poll tax, 144
Polychronicon, 228, 246
Pomerania, 48
Ponthieu, 37, 203
Pontoise, 106
Poor, 75, 177
Poor Caitiff, 239
Popes, 4, 28, 40, 45, 46, 58, 64, 97, 146, 235, 240, 241, 267
Popular rights, 5, 35, 72, 206, 207, 229, 252
Population, 142, 145
Portsmouth, 62, 63, 213, 220
Portugal, 44, 191
Præmunire, 241
Prices, 57, 69, 98, 199-201, 257
Priories alien, 58, 234
Provence, 45, 69, 135, 264
Provisors, 96, 146, 241
Prussia, 48, 178
Purveyors, 28, 75, 146
Pyle of Liddell, 118
Pyrenees, 44, 183, 190, 192, 193, 208, 210

QUE

QUEEN'S College, 102
Quarter-Sessions, 23
Querci, 159
Quimperlé, 94
Quixote, Don, 250

RAGMAN Rolls, 14
Ramah, 29
Ransoms, 10, 22, 120, 155, 168, 171, 184, 192, 209, 231
Ravenspur, 25
Reformation, 5, 96, 239-41, 265, 267
Regency, Council of, 7, 8, 13, 21, 33
Regrators, 147
Rennes, 89, 91
Renunciations, 183, 185, 208
Republics of Italy, 5, 46, 47, 51, 52
Revenue, 29
Revolution, French, 176
Rheims, 182
Rhyme of Sir Topaz, 250
Ribeaumont, Eustache de, 124, 133, 163
Richard II. of England, 144, 187, 233, 234, 248
Robbers (*see* Companies)
Robert II. of Scotland (the Steward), 87, 118, 217
Robert, King of Sicily, 45, 69
Roche Derien, 119
Rochelle, 227, 228, 227
Rokeby, Thomas of, 10
Romance language, 50, 268
Romance of the Rose, 262
Romans, King of, 65, 105, 184
Rome, 50
Rome, Court of (*see* Curia Romana)
Romorantin, 159
Roncesvalles, 193, 197
Rouen, 104
Round Table, 19, 97, 132
Roxburgh, 31
Russia, 4, 48
Ruwaert, 53, 99

ST. Andrew's Abbey, 171
St. Cloud, 105
St. Denys, 105, 111, 165, 180
St. Dominic, 238
St. Francis, 238
St. George, 164
St. Omer, 79, 122, 133
St. Paul's, 17, 244
St. Peter's, 65
St. Pierre, Eustache, 126

STA

St. Vaste, 103
Saintes, 38, 39, 219
Salic law, 34, 89
Salisbury, 17, 21
Salisbury, Countess of, 132
Salisbury, Earl of, 55, 56, 87, 97
Salmon, 148
Salt tax, 157
Sancho, King of Spain, 150
Sandgatte Hills, 124
Sandwich, 14, 62, 150, 169, 181, 220
Saracens, 39, 47, 235
Sardinia, 45
Savoy, 51, 113
Savoy Palace, 170, 186
Saxon Chronicle, 264
Saxons, 50
Scheldt, River, 59, 68
Schoolmen, 64, 247
Schwartz, Michael, 123
Scone, 26
Scotland, 6, 8-13, 24-33, 43, 71, 80, 148, 153
Scurvy, 257
Seal, Great, 85, 212
Seine, River, 104, 105, 172
Selkirk, 141
Sempach, 52
Senchus Mor, 205
Servia, 4, 47
Severn, River, 243
Seville, 45, 191, 196
Shakespeare, 117, 269
Sheep, 245
Sheriffs, 57, 67, 74, 75, 77, 142
Shirley, 243
Sicily, 41, 45, 136
Silk, 256
Skinburness, 9
Sluys (battle of, 77-9), 98, 149, 248
Socage, 256
Somerset, 142
Somme, River, 106
Songs, 150, 246, 262, 263
Southampton, 14, 63
Southwark, 170
Spain, 44, 149, 183, 207, 210, 240
Spies, 234
Spires, 106
Spittle Croft, 140
Stanhope Park, 12
Staples, 55, 125, 129, 147, 198, 201
States-General, 156, 171, 173, 179, 195, 214
Statutes, 61, 76, 85, 145, 146, 147, 202, 235, 264

STE

Stephen, King, 264
Steward, the, 87, 118, 217
Stirling, 87, 88
Stockfish, 148
Stone of Scone, 15
Stourbridge, 256
Stowe, 140
Strasbourg, 139
Stratford, John, 62, 68–72, 77, 81, 82–6
Stratford, Robert, 82
Stretch-neck, 147
Styria, 67
Subsidies voted to King, 28, 74, 116, 153, 212, 228, 230, 151
Subsidies paid to foreign powers, 13, 55, 63, 64, 192
Sumptuary Laws, 201
Sweden, 49
Swift, River, 243
Switzerland, 51
Syria, 45

TACTICS, 9, 30, 69, 103, 109, 162–3, 165, 188, 220, 247
Talleyrand, Cardinal, 161
Tallow, 255, 262
Tartars, 4, 48
Taxes, 3, 28, 56, 73, 82, 95, 173, 199, 207, 214, 228–34
Tay, River, 26, 88
Tello, Don, 194, 195
Tenant-farming, 134, 145
Tennyson, 269
Testament of Love, 266
Tetzel, 240
Teutonic Knights, 48
Thames, River, 56, 63, 81, 235
Thorpe, Sir R., 226
Thouars, 219
Thucydides, 138
Toledo, 210, 211
Tomyris, 11
Toulouse, 44, 101
Touraine, 183
Tournai, 70, 79, 81, 82
Tournaments, 1, 19, 130
Tower of London, 20, 81, 119, 152
Trade, 5, 36, 59, 129, 147–8, 186, 198–200, 219, 254
Travelling, 23, 200
Traylbaston, 23
Treason, 145
Trèves, Archbishop of, 64
Trevisa, 265

WEL

Troubadours, 264
Trouvères, 263, 267
Troyes, 221
Tudors, 47
Turks, 5, 47
Tuscany, 46
Tweed, 86
Tyburn, 21
Tyne, 10

ULSTER, 203
Ulster, Earl of, 205
Underwalden, 52
Ural Mountains, 48
Urban V., 190, 216, 230
Uri, 52

VANNES, 89, 94
Vasilovitz, Ivan, 48
Vaugirard, 107
Vegetables, 257
Venice, 256
Vermandois, 221
Vesconti, 184, 209
Vicar-General, 66, 86
Vienne, John de, 123
Vienne, River, 160, 213
Vierzon, 159
Villains, 61, 74, 144, 177, 255, 257
Villani, J., vi., 13, 123
Villani, M., vi., 169
Vincennes, Bois de, 39
Vintry, 186
Violante of Milan, 209
Virgil, Polydore, 132
Vironfosse, 68
Vittoria, 194

WACE, 266
Wadicourt, 109
Wages, 142, 143, 255, 258
Wallachia, 4
Walsingham, 130, 221
Wardrobe Book, 66
Warwick, Earl of, 107, 110
Wat Tyler, 135, 139
Wax, 262
Ways and Means, 28, 56, 70, 76
Wear, River, 10
Weights and Measures, 57, 75
Welsh, 29, 30, 62, 68, 110, 113, 172

WEN

ncestaus, 184
sley, John, 239
stminster, 21, 37, 95, 225
stminster Abbey, 15
stminster, Palace of, 23, 37, 83, 233
heat, 228, 257
clif, 226, 233, 237, 258, 265
ght, Isle of, 42
lliam I., 1, 248, 253, 263
nchester, 17, 18
nchester School, 236
nchester, Statute of, 22
ndows, 245, 260
ndsor, 90, 97, 170, 236
ne, 62, 147, 199, 200, 256

ZUY

Wissant, 124
Wool, 54, 55, 57, 73, 74, 129, 145, 147, 199, 235, 254, 255
Worcestershire, 256
Worsted, 129, 199
Wykeham, William of, 225, 245, 236

YARMOUTH, 141, 255
Yeomen, 256
York, 9, 14, 16, 28
Ypres, 99

ZEALAND, 81
Zuyder Zee, 50

LONDON: PRINTED BY
SPOTTISWOODE AND CO., NEW-STREET SQUARE
AND PARLIAMENT STREET

00030809

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 18 July, 2018